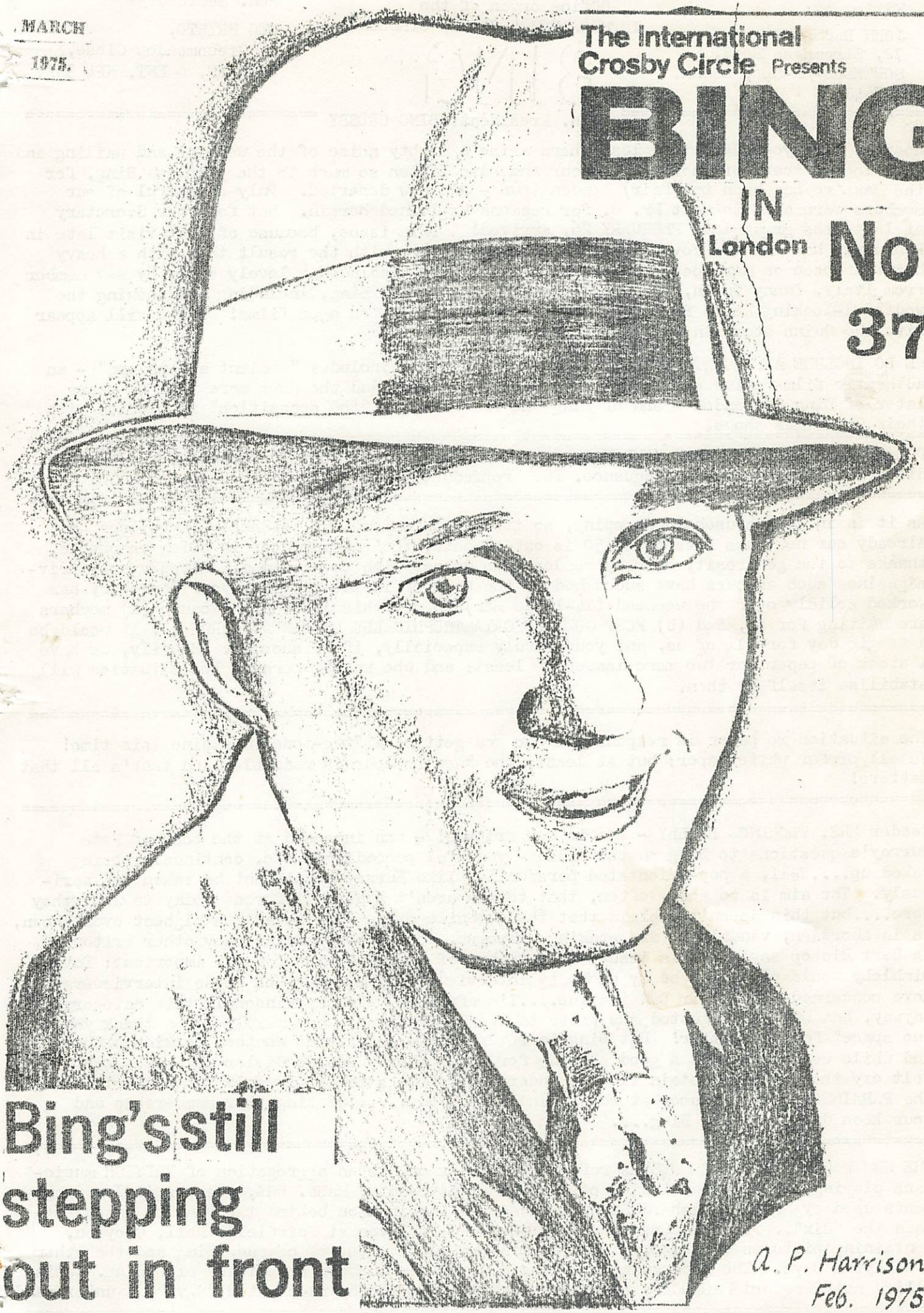
MARCH
1975.

The International
Crosby Circle Presents

BING

IN
London

No
37



Bing's still stepping out in front

A. P. Harrison
Feb. 1975

Edited by:
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Office organ of the
INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

BING

Hon. Secretary:
REG BRISTO,
7, Greenmeadow Close,
CWMBRAN, GWENT, NP4 3NR.

Hon. President: BING CROSBY

Hearken unto your Secretary lest there arise a mighty noise of the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth of those who labour and also listen so much to the peerless Bing, for the Maestro has been to (fair) London town - and now departed. Only a handful of our members were able to meet Mr. C. for reasons explained herein. But for your Secretary at last, the great day, FEBRUARY 26, arrived! This issue, because of that visit late in February, has meant a severe reshuffle of material, with the result that with a heavy heart a dozen or more pages had to be "axed". These included a lovely story by new member from Italy, Danny Quinn, and some splendid pictures of Bing, including one showing the youthful-looking Keith Parkinson who is such an expert on aged films! These will appear with the Quinn story in the next issue.

WE DO INCLUDE A PIQUANT "REPRODUCTION" PAGE and this includes "ancient and modern" - an authentic film review of a Crosby picture from 1933 - and the news more than 40 years later of Bing in London - and of Bing and Bob swamping "the opposition" in America with their Christmas shows.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PAGE NUMBERED 48 SHOULD READ 46 (due to the reshuffle) but makes no difference to the reading sequence. The "reproduction" page is 47/48.....

As it is in your household shopping, so it is with paper, ink, stencils, envelopes &c. Already our new subs rate of £1.50 is out-of-date, tho' no increase is being announced, thanks to the generosity of many readers who do not wish to be named. Already many priv-magazines such as ours have succumbed in the face of inflation. Now your Secretary has worked solidly over the weekend (14-15-16 Mar) to get this issue out because (a) members are waiting for it, and (b) POST GOES UP CATASTROPHICALLY ON MONDAY MARCH 17! It would be a tragic day for all of us, and yours truly especially, if we succumb. Happily, we have a stock of paper for two more issues at least: and who knows, perhaps the situation will stabilise itself by then.

The situation re paper is responsible for you getting a "two-tone" magazine this time! We all prefer white paper: but at least, the "new" colour is readable. And that's all that matters!

Reader MRS. FLORENCE HOOLEY - Ena to her friends! - was incensed at the tone of Pete Murray's questions to Bing on the radio - youthful peccadiloes etc, continually being raked up....Well, a pop-orientated personality like Murray should not be taken too seriously. The aim is to show, often, that things aren't really different today to what they were....but this doesn't explain that the juvenile crime rate is at its highest ever known, as is abortion, vandalism, drug-taking, divorce, pornography and so many other criteria. As Bert Bishop says in this issue, the calibre of the interviewer is so important: David Dimbleby would certainly be my choice to interview Bing. So many of these interviewers are more concerned with their OWN imagine....I'm afraid I place Parkinson in this category. Anyway, Ena was so disgusted she wrote to the Radio Times - but merely got a thank you and "no space" for her letter! But Bing is returning in July to do another Parkinson Show - and while we hope to get a good showing for our members, Leslie Gaylor makes the heart-felt cry that members obtain tickets under their "own steam"! I would suggest writing to the PARKINSON SHOW producer at the beginning of July.....stating your membership and your keen desire to see Bing....

THE NEW PAUL WHITEMAN ORCHESTRA referred to later on, is an aggregation of BRITISH musicians playing, by kind permission of Williams University, Mass. USA, the original arrangements used by "Pops". Richard Sudhalter was the inspiration behind the venture - and he does the "Bix"....I have a programme of the concert given at Fairfields Hall, Croydon, containing pictures of the original Whiteman orchestra with, of course, Bing and the other two Rhythm Boys. The repertoire contains many of the numbers associated with Bing. Chris Ellis, noted record PRODUCER, takes the part of Bing in the re-created "Boys", I understand

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SPECIAL 25th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

An accurate account of club activities from 1950 to the present day has been specially prepared for this issue by Bert Bishop, with contributions from Frank Murphy, Alf Farrow and Leslie Gaylor.
Read all about our 25 glorious years on pages 22 to 28.

EDITORIAL

Every Christmas at "Bingville" we string up row after row of cards received from members both near and far, and once again our sincere thanks go to all those who thoughtfully contributed in this way to our 'happy holiday'. Special thanks go to Keith and Kath Parkinson for their particularly fine calendar, and to Norman Toogood and one or two others for their generosity in relation to tape purchases. Susan and I wish you all a happy and prosperous 1975.

In keeping with recent trends, this particular issue of "BING" brings you more exclusive discographical information, the most important of which commences the 'CROSBYOGRAPHY' section for this quarter.

Happy reading!

BING'S VISIT TO SPOKANE

Thanks to Northern Ireland member JOHNNY JONES, your Editor was able to peruse a copy of "SIGNUM" ('house' journal of Gonzaga University), dated October 1974 which gave an interesting report of Bing's visit on the 12th of September. Accompanying the write-up were six photographs of Bing, all of which showed him to be in perfect health and looking more like 53 than 73. It is worth noting that Bing's Christmas Message to the ICC was recorded during the following month. As most members will know, the Crosby Library is located at the University. This showplace of the Pacific Northwest was a gift of Bing. Over 175,000 volumes are available for research and study and many rare art collections are on exhibit throughout the year. A special tourist attraction inside the building is the Crosbyana Room which houses Bing's musical and cinema awards. There are so many plaques and scrolls, etc. on display that you wonder how one man has had the time to get so involved with his fellow man in such an unselfish way. Gonzaga has certainly been one of the recipients of his kindness. Bing spoke at some length about the Crosby Library in his taped message to the ICC in 1965.

At the time of stencilling this issue, Bing has just spent two weeks in London, during which time he has personally met at least 12 ICC members. The weather has been glorious for him, and apart from making two outstanding LP's he has appeared 'live' on BBC television and radio! On-the-spot coverage of these and other activities can be found within.

L A R R Y C R O S B Y

The ICC is deeply saddened to report that Bing's elder brother, Larry Crosby, died of cancer at Century City Hospital on 12th February 1975 - two weeks prior to Bing's London recording session. His funeral was held at 9.30 a.m. on Saturday, 15th February in St. Victor's Church, Los Angeles.

Larry, who was 80 years old, was Bing's business manager and Honorary Vice-President of the International Crosby Circle. It is known that he had been making a slow recovery from a serious bout of pnuemonia in early 1974. It is worth recalling that in 1971 Larry was Executive Director of "PEACE" - Prisoners in Exchange for American Constructive Enterprise - POW's in Vietnam.

Larry had been running Bing's business affairs since the death of their brother Everett in 1966. With the death also of Ted (Theodore) in December 1973, Bing and Bob Crosby are now the only surviving brothers from their family of seven. There were two sisters, Catherine (who died recently) and Maryrose, of whom we have no recent information.

One of the very few existing photographs of Larry recently appeared on page 9 of "BINGANG" for December 1974.

On behalf of all members and officers, the ICC conveys its deepest sympathy to Bing and his family.

THE LONDON RECORDING SESSION

by the EDITOR

Chappells Recording Studio
New Bond Street
London.
February 26th, 1975.

Can you imagine the looks on the faces of, among others, Reg Bristo, Phil Clarke and John Ewens when BING CROSBY appeared at the door of our listening booth and said, "I thought I'd pop in to say hello to you all". Someone close on his heels (probably Ken Barnes) retorted, "What do you want to say hello to that lot for!" and the silence of a moment before was broken with laughter all round.

Bing's appearance at the conclusion of his February 26th recording session will forever remain in the memory of each and every ICC member present on that occasion, but let's retrace our steps and follow the events through in their correct sequence...

Around October time last year, Ken Barnes (in correspondence with the ICC) had announced the possibility of Bing coming to this country for the purpose of making an LP for United Artists. Tentative studio dates were made known in these pages, but we were soon advised that the bookings had been postponed because of Bing's tight working schedule. At one stage in the proceedings it seemed more than likely that Bing would not be coming here at all, but dubbing his vocals over pre-recorded orchestral tracks back in the States. This unsatisfactory situation was frowned upon by Ken Barnes, and Bing himself realised that such a decision would prove regrettable. With this in mind, new studio dates were booked for February this year, and we were led to believe that a maximum of 12 members would be allowed in for each session. Unfortunately, word got around in the wrong places and it wasn't long before United Artists and Ken Barnes were being inundated with telephone requests from the press, TV and radio networks, and music publishers, all wanting to gain admittance and listen to the biggest super-star of them all. Consequently, it came as no surprise to hear that United Artists had issued a harsh but fair statement that no-one would be allowed inside the building, other than authorised personnel. We were disappointed to say the least, but the important thing was that Bing would be coming here to make the recordings. Two albums were now planned totalling 24 tracks, and details were printed in our November 1974 issue.

Early February brought good news from our Publicity Officer, Leslie Gaylor. It seems that Bing, in a four-page letter to Ken Barnes, had expressed a desire to meet "one or two" members at the conclusion of the final session on February 26th. Ken presented Leslie with the somewhat impossible task of suggesting "three or four" members who would be deserving of an invite. It is not difficult to imagine the tricky situation with which Leslie was faced, but he

worked wonders! Not only did he persuade Ken to go above this limit, but he succeeded in getting nine of us into the studio on the morning of the 26th.

Your Editor and his wife, along with member John Ewens from Upminster, consider ourselves fortunate to be among this generous number, and our arrival at the studio coincided with that of Secretary Reg. As we chatted in the adjacent corridor to the studio, a familiar figure in the person of Ken Barnes appeared on the scene and I quickly introduced our group. He was happy to meet us and suggested that we squeeze into the listening booth at the far end of the corridor. Apparently, Leslie and the other members were already on the premises and had witnessed the recording of two or three numbers prior to our arrival. As we entered the room I espied Leslie looking very happy and proud - and he had every right to be, for these sessions were really the result of his own doing. It was Leslie who first put the idea of the albums to Bing, thus paving the way for Ken Barnes and arranger/conductor Pete Moore.

Our little group (Susan, John Ewens, Reg Bristo and myself) settled in with the others just in time to see and hear Bing (separated from us by glass) running through "Yours Sincerely" to be featured on the album of stage and screen songs. Several trial-runs were attempted, and at least two good 'takes' made in the course of about 45 minutes. We had a perfectly clear view of Bing all the time, looking exceptionally healthy, acting alert and with obvious humour, and above all sounding more like the Crosby of the 1950's than the 1970's. Who could possibly believe the age of this man? We can personally support all that Ken Barnes has written about Bing's voice in the November issue.

Bing was wearing an off-blue coloured sports hat (under which a pencil was tucked in similar fashion to that familiar shot with Al Jolson) and a red cardigan. Susan was quick to observe that he had his initials embroidered on the breast pocket of his shirt!

Came the end of the recording and Bing made his exit through a door at the far end. Within minutes he re-appeared at our door, and a sudden hush pervaded the room in which we were assembled. As I said at the beginning of this article, can you imagine how Reg and the others must have felt at this precise moment? As I happened to be positioned on one side of the door when Bing appeared, he stood right alongside me and addressed our group ... a unique experience! After his opening remark he commented, "I daresay I know most of you", and there followed a brief moment of silence. I quickly spoke up: "Bing, would you mind if we took a few photographs?" "No, go right ahead", came his reply. "Let me know when you're ready", and he moved into the room. Our party surrounded him, armed with various items for his attention and he commented, "I suppose you want me to sign these?" How right he was! For a good 15 minutes, he autographed various record sleeves, photographs and letters, during which time Phil Clarke took two or three polaroid photographs, one of which was of Bing standing with Reg. Needless to say, Phil's delight in giving Reg the photograph was overshadowed only by Reg's delight in receiving it!

By this time, I was ready to do business with my own camera and I suggested to Bing that a photograph of him and Susan would be much appreciated. "Come on, Sue!" he said, and the two of them stood side by side for one of the most important pictures I've ever taken in my life! Came my turn to be featured in a shot, and in this instance John Ewens took the camera and clicked the button. Lo and behold, the bulb didn't flash! Of all occasions to find yourself with a 'dud'! Bing resumed signing various bits and pieces whilst yours truly frantically set the camera up for another 'take'. By the time I was ready, however, Bing was on the verge of leaving the room and I had to call him back. I'm glad to say that I did get my photograph, following which Bing said his goodbyes and departed for another engagement. (continued overleaf)

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ONE OR MORE PRINTS OF THESE COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE EDITOR, price 20 pence each, plus a stamped, self-addressed envelope. (photograph sizes: 3½" by 3½")

Please state your requirements:-

(a) BING CROSBY with John Bassett

(b) BING CROSBY with Susan Bassett (and Leslie Gaylor)

(Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery)

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* LESLIE GAYLOR writes.... *
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Through the medium of our journal I wish to convey my personal thanks to record producer Ken Barnes and arranger/conductor Pete Moore for the brilliant and truly professional manner in which they produced the two Bing Crosby LP's recently at Chappells Recording Studio in London. The 'United Artists' record company are also to be highly commended for bearing the heavy costs involved in these sssions and for backing and showing great enthusiasm when Ken Barnes told them of Bing's great interest in his proposals.

I have had the privilege of hearing all the 26 songs Bing has recorded (including the two titles made in October 1974) and I can trughfully say that Crosby admirers everywhere will be delighted with the great work that has been done by Ken Barnes and Pete Moore. Everything possible has been done to make these two albums a great success, even the superb musicians having given their best, so if the albums do not 'make it', it will certainly not be for the lack of trying! When the albums are realesed it is hoped that ICC members will do everything in their power to help the records along on the road to success.

The first album, "THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT", is to be released in August, and the second album of show songs at an unknown date next year.

The recordings are all very good indeed. Bing is in very fine voice and I should say that technically he has been recorded better than at any time during his long and great career. The sound in the studio was really superb and Ken Barnes informs me that he will personally edit the recordings and ensure that Bing is not 'covered' by the orchestra. In effect, the recording balance will be as all of us personally desire it to be, and the orchestra will be presented to enhance Bing's voice and not cover it.

Judging by what I witnessed and heard at the studios, it is a pity that Ken Barnes and Pete Moore had not worked with Bing years ago. Had they done so, it would have been to Bing's advantage, for these two gentleman certainly know their business.

One of the songs, "I like to dance like they used to dance", was obtained in the USA by Ken the day after it was written, and this is a most appealing little song. Pete Moore's arrangement is very attractive. Another point well worth noting is that all the recordings are of a lengthy nature. Bing sings quite a few verses on each track, and this makes for better listening and gives the recordings more 'class'.

Ken and Pete are very pleased at the way things have turned out and they are of the opinion that Bing has done some very fine recordings. Naturally they are happy and honoured to have been associated with the entire project. I myself was very impressed at the way Pete so very ably conducted the orchestra and handled each session. A talented man if ever there was one. This great enterprise by Ken Barnes will pay off for everyone, I'm sure, not only for 'United Artists' but for Bing and his admirers everywhere.

I was invited by Ken to spend a couple of days in London and was fortunate in attending two of the six sessions - truly great moments! At one session I found myself in the company of Eric Crowder, and later in the day Eric and I went along to Ken's home, than later to Pete Moore's home. Ken and Pete are two of the greatest guys I've ever met, and they really know their business. When Eric and I were at Ken's home we witnessed the tremendous pressure being put upon Ken and his wife from all quarters by the endless ringing of the telephone, and we admired their dignity and the way in which they 'kept their cool'.

Finally, I would like to say that among the TV, radio and press matters that Ken arranged for Bing, one item of particular interest will be Bing's telerecording of another "PARKINSON" show when he returns to London in the summer. The BBC will engage a large orchestra to be conducted by Pete Moore and Bing will sing some of the songs from his first album. The TV screening of the show will coincide with the release of this album in August.

Now I come to a point where I must make an appeal to those of our members who are desirous of meeting Bing for the first time when he returns to London. When he arrives, will our members please try to see Bing by their own initiative. So much pressure gets put on me that I cannot scheme and carry out the ways and means of helping everyone to see him. There are so many non-members

who also want to meet Bing and I find that I am always involved with endless telephone calls, scores of letters and telegrams, as well as great personal expense. So many people also need moral support to meet Bing. Telephone calls to me are made at my works and even the local police station! To get to see Bing one needs to be lucky, but above all one needs to possess a strong will and determination. I sincerely hope that our members will see my point of view so that I can have 'peace of mind' on this matter. I wish every success to those so very desirous of seeing Bing -- but please do try and help yourself.

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The following letter from Ken Barnes, dated February 26th, appears by courtesy of Leslie....

Dear Leslie,

Today, we completed the last of six recording sessions with Bing Crosby. The results are far greater than we could ever have anticipated, and United Artists Records have two superb LP's (26 titles) that will, I am sure, enrich their catalogue (and their coffers) for many years to come.

None of this would have happened without your help and co-operation. By supplying me with valuable contacts within the Crosby organisation, I was able to start the ball rolling in getting Bing interested in this project.

I know I speak for Pete Moore and all of the many people who were privileged to be involved in these historic sessions when I say how very grateful I am for your wonderful assistance.

Kindest regards,

(signed) KEN

Ken Barnes.

And in a letter dated March 5th, Pete Moore writes....

Dear Leslie,

Now that the Bing Crosby sessions are completed, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you for your help in setting up this project. Ken Barnes tells me that he could not have set this up without your help and assistance in many ways, and for myself, I was delighted to have the chance of working with Bing.

Thank you for your kind comments about my work on the LP's and again, thank you for everything you have done to make it possible.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) PETE

Pete Moore.

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*
* RECORDING DATES AND INSTRUMENTATIONS *
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The information presented below was compiled by Ken Barnes on January 25th and appears by courtesy of Leslie Gaylor.

SESSION ONE (February 19th)

songs: That's what life is all about (Reed, Dacre, Barnes, Crosby)
The good old times (Barnes, Moore)
I love to dance like they used to dance (Goldenberg, M. & A. Bergman)
*The pleasure of your company (Mercer, Previn)

*orchestral dubbing over existing vocals by Bing and Johnny Mercer

instrumentation: 41-piece line-up.
4 tpts, 4 trombones, 2 French horns, 2 alto saxes (doubling on flutes, piccolo, clarinet), 2 tenor saxes (doubling on flutes, clarinets), 1 baritone sax (doubling on flute and bass clarinet), 20 strings (comprising 12 violins, 4 violas, 4 celli), 1 harp, 1 piano (doubling

electric piano), 1 guitar, 1 bass (doubling bass guitar), drums, tuned percussion.

SESSION TWO (February 20th)

songs: The best things in life are free (De Sylva, Brown, Henderson)
No time at all (Schwartz)
Bon vivant (Mercer, Dolan)
I'll never fall in love again (David, Bacharach)

instrumentation: 18-piece line-up.
2 tpts (doubling flugelhorns), 2 flutes (doubling piccolo, bass clarinet and alto flute), 1 French horn, 2 guitars, 1 bass (doubling bass guitar), 3 violins, 1 viola, 1 cello, drums, tuned percussion.

SESSION THREE (February 22nd)

songs: I got rhythm (G. & I. Gershwin)
Heat wave (Berlin)
My heart stood still (Rodgers, Hart)
How are things in Glocca Morra? (Harburg, Lane)
Something to remember you by (Dietz, Schwartz)

instrumentation: 43-piece line-up.
Same as February 19th, but with L.A. percussion added. Piano doubling on organ and celeste. One extra guitar.

SESSION FOUR (February 24th)

songs: Hello, Dolly (Herman)
Great day (Youmans, Rose, Eliscu)
Thou swell (Porter)
Looking at you (Porter)
Cabaret (Ebb, Kander)

instrumentation: 20-piece line-up.
4 tpts, 4 trombones, 5 saxes (doubling piccolos, flutes, clarinet, etc.), 1 piano (doubling jangle piano), 2 guitars, 1 bass guitar, drums, tuned percussion, Latin American percussion.

SESSION FIVE (February 25th)

songs: Some sunny day (Berlin)
Breezing along with the breeze (Whiting, Simons, Gillespie)
Razzle dazzle (Kander, Ebb)
Have a nice day (Axton)

instrumentation: 27-piece line-up.
Same as February 24th, but with harmonica and six backing voices added. Organ instead of piano.

SESSION SIX (February 26th)

songs: With a song in my heart (Rogers, Hart)
Yours sincerely (Rogers, Hart)
Send in the clowns (Sondheim)
*Good companions

*orchestral dubbing over existing vocals by Bing and Johnny Mercer

instrumentation: 19-piece line-up.
Same as February 20th, but minus 1 guitar and plus oboe and L.A. percussion.

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The two duets with Johnny Mercer, as shown above, were recorded in the USA on October 17th, 1974. It is interesting to note that Bing's Christmas Message to the ICC was recorded during this same period.

ITEMS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM OUR GATHERING IN LONDON

(a) In conversation with your Editor, Ken Barnes revealed that he almost sued the publishers of his book, "Sinatra and the Great Song Stylists", for their severe 'mutilation' of his completed manuscript. Ken's chapter on Bing suffered the worst editing, so he told me! Even the book's title was not his original idea.

(b) It seems that Bing was very displeased to read the Daily Mirror's "Inside Page" feature on the recording sessions. Apparently, the article was based on heresay - no such 'interview' having taken place. Bing denies having said everything that was reported!

(c) Leslie Gaylor revealed the outstanding news that United Artists will make a third album with Bing if the two recent LP's have good sales. We must all ensure that this becomes a reality. Consequently, if all goes well, Bing's recordings for this year will total an unbelievable 48. Compare this with the gradual decline in his commercial output over the past 10 years. Even without a third album, the previously recorded "Southern" titles (listed on page 10) have already pushed the total up to 36, and we're still only in March! Who would have believed any of this back in January 1974 when doctors were fighting to save Bing's life?

(d) Release of the 'World Records' 7-LP set has been postponed until August. As Phil Clarke said to your Editor, "It looks like we're going to get everything in one go!"

FULFILMENT OF A LIFETIME'S AMBITION

...writes Nottingham member, ERIC CROWDER

Knowing of the recording sessions, and realising that this might be my only chance of seeing Bing, I arranged several weeks ago to take a few days leave from work and stay with a relation in London. As it happens, I consider myself very lucky to have been given the O.K. by Leslie Gaylor to join his party on the morning of February 26th.

The events that followed passed by so quickly that I still can't believe they really happened. I could certainly feel my heart pounding as we were shown into the listening booth at the end of the studio. The room had a large glass window so that we could see the session taking place, and the room was equipped with a giant amplifier. The two hours or so which followed were unbelievable to hear and see. I feel privileged to have been able to experience the thrill of listening to the 'Master' himself, and Pete Moore's brilliant direction of a truly wonderful group of top-class musicians.

Bing was certainly in fantastic voice, and all members will be able to hear Ken Barnes' wonderful work when the first of the albums is released in August this year. And so I extend my very sincere thanks to Bing, Ken Barnes, Pete Moore and particularly Leslie Gaylor, all of whom contributed in fulfilling my lifetime's ambition.

HOTEL MEETING WITH BING

by EDWARD HALE

Never having met Bing I was determined to meet the maestro if only just that once in my life. The opportunity came and was fulfilled on Sunday 23rd February, 1975. I had 'phoned around the hotels and got a pretty good idea of where he was staying. Meantime, Eric Crowder had been in touch with me and between us we decided to 'picket' Claridges in hopes.

I had first gone in the morning, on my own, and presented my ICC membership card at the reception desk, along with my request to see Bing if it were possible. They were very non-commital, though polite about it, and agreed to give Bing a letter that I had written.

Eric arrived in the afternoon, and after some tea we made our way back to the hotel - arriving about 6 p.m. Again we had a negative response at reception; but a nod and a wink definitely told us that Bing wasn't too far away.

We sat in the lounge, hopefully, and not long afterwards, there, before our very eyes, was Bing coming in from the street. He went to reception and made as to go off again. We dithered a moment but it was a case of now or never! So I went up to Bing from behind and touched him lightly on the shoulder, saying, "Excuse me, Mr. Crosby, sir; do you mind very much if we have a word

with you?" Bing turned and eyed us warily! I quickly reassured him that we were ICC members and introduced Eric and myself by name. He could see that we had records and photo's, etc. When he said, "You're who?", still a bit suspiciously, I could have died on the spot! But he soon added, "What can I do for you?", and with that the ice was broken.

We had a little chat about "GRANDSTAND" and the horse, Uncle Bing, and seeing that we had some things we hoped to get autographed, he said, "I don't think this is the right place to do that - let's find a table somwehere".

Whilst we were chatting and he was signing photo's and records, Bing said to Eric, "What's that accent?" - referring to mine. Eric replied, "He's local; from Highbury here in London", and Bing answered, "Gee; he's worse than cockney!" It was all lighthearted comment and we had a laugh about it.

Among the photo's that I asked him to sign was a black and white whole plate that came with my copy of the MGM album, "THE SPECIAL MAGIC OF BING AND SATCHMO". (The picture is also featured on the sleeve, in colour). Bing said to me, "Where did you get that photo' - I never wear a hat like that at race meetings?" I told him it was in with the record and he said that he would like a copy - it seemed to intrigue him. Anyway, he signed mine and I promised him a copy which I hope to get somehow. I'm wondering if any other members had this photograph in their record sleeve as no one I've spoken to yet has.

We asked him how his recording was going, wished him the best of luck, shook hands and took our leave. For me it was a night I will never forget, and I'm sure that goes for Eric Crowder, too.

TELEPHONE CALL FROM BING TO BERT! by the EDITOR

It gives me particular pleasure in bringing the following outstanding item to the attention of our members. When Edward Hale learnt that Bert Bishop was unable to travel to London and meet Bing as other members had done, he wrote to Bing at his hotel asking him to telephone Bert instead! Bing once again demonstrated his benevolent thoughtfulness (which is the mark of the truly 'great') by 'phoning Bert for a little chat on the morning of Friday, 28th February. You can imagine Bert's feelings when he heard the words: "This is Bing Crosby - I've been asked to 'phone you". Bert wishes to publically thank Bing for calling and Edward for his very kind action in arranging it. It is our considered opinion that Bing's action in telephoning Bert must surely be unique among UK ICC members, and we're as pleased about this whole matter as Bert is!

THE 'SOUTHERN' SONGS by LESLIE GAYLOR

In January this year, 'Bing Crosby Enterprises' produced an album by Bing consisting of 'Southern' songs, accompanied by a nine-piece orchestra conducted by Paul Smith. The titles, as shown below, are currently on tape only, and will be offered to one of the record companies, possibly United Artists.

Swanee
When it's sleepy time down south
Alabamy bound
Georgia on my mind
Crying in the Carolines
On the Alamo
She is the sunshine of Virginia
Way down yonder in New Orleans
Sailing down the Chesapeake Bay
Stars fell on Alabama
Where the morning glories grow
Carolina in the morning

LESLIE GAYLOR writes a few words about the passing of Larry Crosby:
The whole membership of the ICC will have now learnt of Larry's death on February 12th. He was very helpful in more ways than one and we shall miss the keen interest he showed in the ICC. Bing was due to arrive in London on February 15th and to give himself four days rest before the first of the recording sessions on the 19th. However, Larry's funeral was on the 15th so Bing didn't leave until the following day. Those connected with the sessions saluted Bing for saying that he would still come to London as planned. "Truly the professional man", as Ken Barnes said.

KEEPING TRACK

The latest albums featuring Bing Crosby - reviewed by BERT BISHOP and COLIN PUGH

Spring or not, any time of the year is the right time to review a Bing Crosby Christmas album - an almost annual event. Although "CHRISTMAS WITH THE STARS", Coral (MCA) CDL 8010, was brought to the attention of members via these columns in the previous issue, no details were available at the time of their compilation. Bing makes three contributions to this stereo LP, but in some instances the remainder are worthy of note - hence the full 14 track listing:

Little drummer boy (Harry Simeone Chorale)
The Christmas song (Mel Torme)
Jingle bell rock (Brenda Lee)
Rudolph the red nosed reindeer (BING)
Twelve days of Christmas (Burl Ives)
The first noel (BING)
God rest ye merry, gentlemen (Jack Jones)
Santa Claus is comin' to town (BING)
Do you hear what I hear? (Jack Jones)
Rockin' around the Christmas tree (Brenda Lee)
A jolly holly Christmas (Burl Ives)
White Christmas (Roger Williams)
Winter wonderland (Brenda Lee)
O Bambino (Harry Simeone Chorale)

"Rudolph the red nosed reindeer" is a comparative rarity in stereo, and this particular version of "The first Noel", is (we believe) a newcomer to micro-groove. Although few would miss Brenda Lee on here, for a mixed artiste collection it is well balanced. Particularly recommended is Roger Williams' piano version of "White Christmas".

The sleeve frontispiece represents a window frame inset with small panes. Five of the panes have the five featured singers 'looking in' as it were, Bing's photograph being the standard Decca brochure one, whilst the remainder of the frame shows the snowflakes falling in TV weathercast picture fashion as done by schoolchildren. The reverse of the sleeve is pale blue featuring full titles and credits running vertically parallel with fairly frothy sleeve notes from Nigel Hunter.

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Bing's same studio portrait is used again on what will prove to be a very welcome re-issue of the two late fifties children's stories, "The Emperor's New Clothes" and "An Axe, An Apple And A Buckskin Jacket"; here coupled under the one title of "THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES AND A CHRISTMAS STORY" on London (Decca) LGK 137, at the very reasonable price of £1.08. The back cover photo' is a black and white version of the 'Autobiography' catalogue feature, showing Bing in chequered shirt and trilby hat. The sleeve carried no notes at all. Unlike the earlier US issues, this LP is not babded but runs in continuous play. Bing narrates the stories and sings the following songs:

Side One:
The best dressed man in the world
The best dressed man in the world (reprise)
Never be afraid

Side Two:
How lovely is Christmas
An axe, an apple and a buckskin jacket
Boy at a window
Young Jethro swung his mighty axe
Johnny Appleseed
An incident on Roger's Creek
How lovely is Christmas (reprise)

For anyone who has not heard Bing sing "Never be afraid" it can only be said that this LP is worth the price for that one track alone!

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Readily available by the time you read this issue is a new album entitled "MR. CROSBY AND MR. MERCER" on Coral (MCA) CDLM 8025 - also on cassette and cartridge. No sleeve description as we 'go to press', but we can - at least - disclose the full contents:

Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Shean
Too marvellous for words
Blues in the night
Bob White
You must have been a beautiful baby
On behalf of the visiting fireman
In the cool, cool, cool of the evening
I'm an old cowhand
Accentuate the positive
Autumn leaves
When the world was young
The waiter, the porter and the upstairs maid

****

In the running for the most re-issued LP (refer to the LP-OGRAPHY!) of what has previously been titled as "The Very Best Of Bing Crosby" (among others) is the 1956 session of Bing with the Buddy Bregman orchestra. Not many Crosby buffs would agree that that swinging session does represent the very best of Bing, bouncy though it may be; and it may even be reckoned as a misnomer to call the latest re-issue "THE SPECIAL MAGIC OF BING CROSBY". This is a UK release, MGM 2353 001 (stereo), at the full price of £2.11. Still, here it is in new garb, housed in a sleeve of red - lettering in white - with the unusual colour photograph of Bing in cowboy gear sitting astride a fence, enjoying the great outdoors. Not a bit in keeping with the content, but at least the sleeve is an improvement (in this reviewer's opinion) on that ghastly Music For Pleasure version which has an almost cubist painting of Bing on the cover. Could be that the original HMV issue, "Bing Sings Whilst Bregman Swings", came closest to an acceptable sleeve with the sporty Bing wearing his Pebble Beach cap. This MGM re-issue lists the titles, vertically, on both front and rear of sleeve; there being a three-quarter profile black and white studio photo' enhancing the back of what is, basically, a good sleeve.

Of the original twelve titles, only eleven are featured - "I've got five dollars" being omitted....and that's just about what this package is going to cost you!

Side One:
The blue room
Cheek to cheek
Have you met Miss Jones?
Jeepers creepers
The song is you

Side Two:
Mountain greenery
Nice work if you can get it
September in the rain
Heat wave
They all laughed
'Deed I do

****

A second LP that has Bing narrating a short commentary on the great American sport of baseball is the newly issued US Fleetwood FCLP 3059 (compatible stereo), "THE WORLD CHAMPION PITTSBURGH PIRATES". Readers may recall that 1971 was the year that Bing's famous baseball team won the coveted championship. The sub-title to this LP reads: "All Star Daries (sic!) presents: The Official Record Album with play by play Action Highlights of their 1971 Championship Season narrated by Bob Prince". Bing is to be heard about half-way through side one of this strictly for collectors album.

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More air-shot recordings are gatehered together in a collection called, aptly, "BING AND MARY" (Rhythm On The Radio), Star-Tone ST-225, which readers will surely realise as being Bing with the famous stage and screen actress, Mary Martin. By all accounts this is a very good LP indeed. There has previously been some criticism of the minimal amount of Bing on these Star-Tone albums, the remainder of which has sometimes been rather uninspiring. However, of the 17 tracks on this record, the dulcet tones of Der Bingle are absent from only three: he takes eight solos and the remaining five are duets with Mistress Mary. For the UK members, the 'Harlequin' record shops are the best bet for this and other imported discs.

Side One:
Don't sit under the apple tree (BING '42)
Ain't misbehavin' (M.M. '42)
People like you and me (Duet '42)
My devotion (BING '42)
Trolley song (M.M. '44)
Daybreak (BING '42)
Rolli-o rolling along (Duet '42)
I'm getting tired so I can sleep (M.M. '42)
Mr. Five by Five (BING '42)

Side Two:
A little on the lonely side (BING '46)
*It isn't fair (BING '50)
I'll see you in my dreams (M.M. '48)
*Dearie (Duet '50)
Again (BING '49)
Stay with the happy people (BING '50)
Wait till the sun shines, Nellie (Duet, '50)
*Whispering hope (Duet '50)

Those tracks marked with an asterisk were featured on the All Star Products album, ASP LP 2000; a special pressing issued by the ICC under the title of "Bing Crosby's All-Star Chesterfield Show".

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On the UK market is perhaps the most desirable disc from this quarter's selection, though - regrettably - the fidelity leaves a lot to be desired, of which information is now available. This is "BING CROSBY AT HIS EXTRA SPECIALE" (we've given up trying to find the last word of the title in our dictionaries!) on Avenue International AV. INT. 1018 at, let it be noted, budget price of 87p. This delectable LP features Bing's first radio broadcast, and a 1934 radio broadcast with Georgie Stoll and his orchestra. The songs are as follows:

Side One:	Side Two:
Just one more chance (2/9/1931)	Easy to remember ('34)
I'm through with love (2/9/1931)	Ole faithful ('34)
Ole faithful (few lines only) ('34)	Lullaby of Broadway ('34)
Blame it on my youth ('34)	Clouds (few lines only) ('34)
(remaining items non-Bing)	

Readers will recall that alternative 'takes' of the two songs from Bing's first broadcast (under the auspices of 'The Leroy Diamond Company') were incorporated on an RCA-Victor LP, issued in the US and UK a little over two years ago; and what excellent recordings they were. Truly collectors' items. Moreover, this LP seems to be an equivalent of the US Wallaby/Frogbien (Amalgamated) FB 6309 entitled "Prelude To Immortality - Mister Soft Soap"; strictly speaking a non-commercial release. Avenue Recordings are distributed by President Records Ltd., London, and if they prove to be other than a 'pirate label' company, then all the titles will qualify for a 'commercial release' tag, and therefore be accorded a place in any such listings. But never mind the technicalities; go out and buy this one, for even if you possess Bing's famous 'firsts' on tape, the remainder are real gems taken from a truly vintage year for Bing. The front sleeve photograph is worth the money alone!

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Perhaps of fairly recent origin is the US 45 rpm 'single' on RCA 47-1510, entitled "SOUVENIR RECORD OF THE OLD VICTOR STUDIOS". It features "My blue heaven" by Gene Austin, and "I Surrender, Dear" (1931 version) by Bing on the one side, and the reverse states "COMMEMORATIVE RECORD OF THE NEW RCA VICTOR STUDIOS" on which Henry Mancini's "More Music from Peter Gunn" may be heard. Any member with further news of this issue is invoted to contact the Editor.

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From US Radiola comes "THE ANDREWS SISTERS SHOW", MR 1033. Bing is featured on side one only, the titles of which are unknown at the time of 'going to press'. The sleeve states: "Unedited, exactly as heard on the Blue Network, December 31, 1944, with Gabby Hayes, the Riders Of The Purple Sage, and guest Bing Crosby". This is the complete show as sponsored by 'Kelvinator'. Try 'Harlequin' or Dave Carey for this one. (see page 14)

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Three new Totem albums have just been brought to our attention, all of which feature radio shows of Bing with Al Jolson. Actual album titles are unknown but the contents are as follows:-

TOTEM 1013	"Chesterfield Show",	15th February 1950
	" "	30th November 1949
TOTEM 1016	"Chesterfield Show",	3rd May 1950
	"Philco Radio Time",	15th January 1947 ✓
TOTEM 1021	"Philco Radio Time",	3rd December 1947
	" "	7th May 1947 ✓

Watch this space for further information!

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Certainly the most important item for this quarter is that in January of this year, Bing recorded 12 songs with a small group of musicians in America. These are the "Southern" songs mentioned by Bing in his letter to Leslie Gaylor (published in "BING"-34, page 34). Currently, the session is on tape only, but we understand that Bing is hoping to sell the tracks to United Artists in the UK. See page 10 of this issue for a listing of the titles.

The Bing titles are now to hand on the Radiola album, MR 1033, reported earlier in this section. Two duets are featured on the LP, namely "Don't fence me in" and "Accentuate the positive". Remaining items non-Bing.

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The following information on new US releases appears by courtesy of Ken Gray who has given us permission to re-print part of his "CLUB CROSBY NEWSLETTER", Volume 1, Number 4, dated February 7th.

(1) Murray Hill 931680 (4-LP set): "3 HOURS, 59 MINUTES, 51 SECONDS WITH THE MARX BROTHERS". Includes three sketches with Bing:
   (a) Philco Show of Feb. 12, 1947 - Bing and Groucho duet: "Go west, young man".
   (b) Command Performance of 1944 - Bing sings "My blue heaven" accompanied by Harpo on harp.
   (c) Philco Show of April 30, 1947 - Bing, Groucho and Dorothy Shay sing: "Feudin' and Fightin'".
   Obtainable from Publishers Central Bureau, Dept. 388, 1 Champion Avenue, Avenel, New Jersey, 07131, USA. $9.95 plus $1.00 postage for our State-side readers, but of course the cost of postage will be considerably more for UK readers.

(2) Tulip TLP 108: "BING CROSBY 1945".

Side One:	Side Two:
KRAFT MUSIC HALL selection:-	COMMAND PERFORMANCE selection:-
Don't fence me in	Sketch with Bob Hope
Sleigh ride in July	More and more
Evelina	Sketch with Lauren Bacall and Hope
Is you is or is you ain't	Don't fence me in
Birth of the blues	
Wait till the sun shines, Nellie	
The waiter and the porter, etc.	
My melancholy baby	

(3) Sunbeam SB 206: "BLUES IN THE NIGHT". A Woody Herman LP containing Bing's commercial recording of "I ain't got nobody".

(4) Radiola MR 1040: "JUDY GARLAND ON RADIO". Includes sketch entitled "Punchy and Judy" from a show of October 5th, 1949.

(5) Recar Records PCA 5001 (2-LP set): "66 FLASHBACKS". Record one includes a 1953 Bing and Bob Hope sketch.

(6) Jazum 30: "BOSWELL SISTERS AND CONNIE BOSWELL". LP still to be released at the time of 'going to press' but will include "Life is just a bowl of cherries" and "The thrill is gone" from the commercial recording of "George White's Scandals".

(7) Wimp (Amalgamated) 194850: Title unknown. This will be a Bing/Dick Powell LP (not yet released), containing two of their radio shows together.

(8) Everest 3312: "LOUIS ARMSTRONG IN MEMORIAM". Re-issue of UK Sagapan 6904.

(9) All former US Decca albums have now been transferred to the MCA label. The conversion numbers of those records still available are as follows:-

DXSB 7184	becomes	MCA2-4045
DXSB 7186	"	MCA2-4008
DL 78128	"	MCA 167
DL 78207	"	MCA 177
DL 78262	"	MCA 519
DL 79034	"	MCA 2057

(the above are all 12" LP's)

45 rpm 'singles':-

9-23495	becomes	MCA 65000
9-23786	"	MCA 65001
9-23787	"	MCA 65002
9-23788	"	MCA 65003
9-23789	"	MCA 65004
9-24295	"	MCA 65005
9-23415	"	MCA 65006
9-27478	"	MCA 65007
9-23819	"	MCA 65013
9-24273	"	MCA 65014
9-23281	"	MCA 65019
9-23777	"	MCA 65021
9-23778	"	MCA 65022

(10) Golden 45 rpm 'single' 00215: "HOW LOVELY IS CHRISTMAS" (record and book set). Bing is not mentioned on the label nor book cover, but the record does contain snatches of the title song (Bing's commercial recording) on both sides. Bing does not narrate the story however.

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Finally, the following late news has just arrived on the Editor's desk of a new UK release and two overseas albums:-

12" UK MGM 2356.072. This is a Louis Armstrong LP, the title of which is unknown at the time of 'going to press'. Contains the two Bing/Louis duets: "Preacher" and "Way down yonder in New Orleans". Remaining items believed to be non-Bing.

12" SPANISH MCA M.18.181. This is a re-issue of DL 8419. Refer to the ICC's LP-OGRAPHY.

12" DUTCH POLYDOR 2343.043. This is a re-issue of Metro 591. Refer to the ICC's LP-OGRAPHY.

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A new edition of the "BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY", scheduled for early 1976, will incorporate every new issue, re-issue and overseas equivalent brought to your attention within this section of the magazine each quarter. Don't miss it!

KEN GRAY announces that the following 8-track tapes are now available in the States of some of Bing's old radio shows. The series is produced by Soundco.

ORS 1 - Nov. 5, 1947 (Bing with Ozzie & Harriet Nelson)
ORS 4 - Feb. 8, 1950 (Bing with Fred Allen and Peggy Lee)
ORS 5 - Apr. 25, 1951 (Bing with Louis Armstrong and Rose Marie)
ORS 6 - Mar. 21, 1951 (Bing with Judy Garland and Les Paul)
ORS 39 - Mar. 26, 1952 (Bing with Marilyn Maxwell)
ORS 40 - Nov. 21, 1951 (Bing with Alexis Smith and Burt Wheeler)
ORS 3 - May 30, 1951 (Bing with Helen O'Connell)

These are part of a "Golden Radio Favorites" series; one show per 8-track tape. Prices range from $1.00 to $6.00 each. Try your US contacts for these.

THE "BING" TAPE SERVICE

by BOB ROBERTS

Operating in conjunction with the ICC, the "BING" Tape Service provides members with the opportunity of acquiring high-quality tapes ('open reel' and cassette) of virtually anything ever sung or spoken by Bing into a microphone during the course of his 49 years in show business. Strict legal copyright clauses are applicable to private tape recordings (for obvious reasons) but these special facilities are available via the ICC without offence to anyone.

All tape is fully guaranteed and recorded dual-track (if 'open reel') at a choice of speed to suit the facilities of members. Delivery is usually within 21 days of receipt of order and payment.

For further information, please send a stamped S.A.E. to:-

BOB ROBERTS (ICC Publicity Officer)
"Bob's Stores",
56 Thorold Road,
CHATHAM,
Kent, England.

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SPECIAL ICC SERVICE TO MEMBERS

Edward Hale announces that he has the facilities to play and tape-record large transcription records up to 24" in diameter. Members wishing to take advantage of this service should write to Edward at 48 Highbury Hill, London, N5 1AP. (S.A.E. appreciated)

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CELLULOID CROSBY

by KEITH PARKINSON

Bing's 1974 movie contribution was as narrator in "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT". A film that duplicated its box office success in the United States in this country. The critics found the answer for its mass appeal: No matter how mediocre a film musical appears to be there is usually one highlight that stands out. Wheteher it is a dance or a vocal routine that item usually appears memorable, out of context, and a string of such clips is sure box office. Given that of all the major studios, MGM made more good musicals than the rest of the studios combined and you should end up with the cream of the cream. "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" is just that. But critical success is not the same as public acclaim, and here I don't accept the general reason given as to why audiences queued for seats in the major cities in which the film played. Almost every review related the film's popularity in the USA to its nostalgic appeal and assumed that the same would apply elsewhere. I disagree because the age of the average person in cinema audiences has dropped since 1945 so that in America and the UK by far the majority of picturegoers are below the age of 24. Even allowing for the fact that the film's content successfully persuades the older generation to stray from the fireside I would still be surprised if more than half the people who have so far seen the film will remember such movies as "SHOWBOAT" or "SEVEN BRIDES FOR SEVEN BROTHERS" (both featured in "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT") from their initial release in the 1950's.

I'm not too sure that I believe all that's said about the current boom in nostalgia. Forgetting dictionary definitions, I prefer to regard nostalgia as a longing for eternal youth. People who go into raptures about "CASABLANCA" are really saying that when they watched Bogart and Bergman in that film they were young and virile and the enjoyment surrounding a revival of "CASABLANCA" is partly due to the rekindled memories of an era in which their pulses seemed to beat faster. I would say that a Buddy Holly recording has a greater nostalgic appeal for me than any Bing recording, and yet the latter pleases me more musically. It looks as though we're getting in deep here so let me wrap things up by putting for ward the theory that "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" is a very popular film not for its nostalgic appeal but because it contains a selection of material which is of a standard no longer available to the general cinema going public. Besides, as the motto in my Christmas cracker read, "Nostalgia isn't what it used to be".

The release of the film was timed to coincide with MGM's 50th anniversary. Ironically the studio that once boasted "more stars than there are in the heavens" had little to celebrate in 1974. The company no longer distributes its films, its theatres have been sold and the production schedule is slender. Since the auction of sets, props and costumes in 1970, MGM's chief enterprise has been a not so successful hotel complex in Las Vegas.

It is not uncommon for a film to reach this country from abroad with its original running time reduced. This is usually the work of the censor, the distribution company or the studio responsible for making it. The first tries to prevent our becoming depraved, the distributor thinks we won't go to the pictures unless a double bill comprising two ninety minute films is showing, whilst the producer sometimes thinks he can cut out a boring scene or two to assist a film's popularity. I have never known of a case where a film is shown in the UK with a longer running time than in its country of origin - until "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT". In the States it ran for 134 minutes but the release print for this country runs for 137 minutes. The additional three minutes? A bonus for all of us in the form of Bing's "True Love" duet with Grace Kelly from the film "HIGH SOCIETY". The official reason is that the footage containing Princess Grace of Monaco will appeal to European royalists but coincidentally it will please everyone going to see and hear Bing's contribution. In addition Bing is seen in another clip from "HIGH SOCIETY" - the "Well, did you evah" duet with Frank Sinatra - and also singing the title song from the film "GOING HOLLYWOOD".

Bing acts as a narrator for about ten minutes of the film's length, a duty he shares with Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, Peter Lawford, Liza Minelli, Donald O'Connor, Debbie Reynolds, Mickey Rooney, Frank Sinatra and Elizabeth Taylor. On the subject of narration, the only poor review of the film that I have read

was Tom Milne's review for the "Monthly Film Bulletin", in which he stated, "Virtually every line given to the starry commentators, unfortunately, is complacent drivel". There would be little merit in listing the approximately 100 songs, taken from over 60 films, in these pages but the sheer number of items Director/Producer Jack Haley, Jnr. has tried to cram into the proceedings limits the length of many extracts used in the film to mere fragments. Jack Haley senior was the tin man in "THE WIZARD OF OZ" by the way, whilst junior is married to Liza Minelli, the daughter of "Oz's" star, born whilst Judy was married to film director Vincente Minelli. With the array of musical talent assembled it is surprising to find that Henry Mancini has been engaged for additional music adaptation, although this does help to smooth over the transition from one film to another.

The marketing of the film made great play of the catch lines, "Boy, do we need it now" and "It's more than a movie, it's a celebration". With galloping inflation and every other newspaper headline relating to some strike or dispute the publicists never had it so good. The state of the country must have driven people to seek escapism, and "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" could not have come along at a better time.

Haley was recently asked what it would cost if "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" had been made today and he put the cost at around $500,000,000. A prohibitive amount, which means that to follow "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT", the film companies must go scurrying to the vaults. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer won't have to dig too deeply, however. "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" ran for around six hours when it was originally assembled. So the audiences that came away bemoaning the fact that clips from favourites such as "BELLS ARE RINGING", "SILK STOCKINGS" or "CABIN IN THE SKY" could find themselves in luck when watching "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT II" which is on the way. Amongst the other major studios that are planning similar compilations the best news for a long time must be that Paramount have theirs in the pipeline. With Bing a contractee to that studio for nearly a quarter of a century it looks as though we're in for some real musical highlights.

One impression gained from "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" is that MGM never skimped on production values. All the clips had that Metro look of a thriving studio. In the 1930's and 1940's it was possible to walk into a film midway through its screening and recognise the studio responsible for the production by the general look and sound of the movie. The scenery for the 'quickie' republic westerns never varied - they had a back lot of at least half an acre of stagebush and boulders. Warner Brothers product was noticeable for the long, dark shadows that were as apparent in Connecticut as in Casablanca. Warners were also able to have a background music score that was both non-intrusive and at the same time managed to underline every foot of the action. The clarity of Warner's musical soundtrack was admired by all the Hollywood studios. And Paramount? In a previous article I touched on Paramount's budgetary policy in the late 'forties but the studio was even more dollar conscious in the preceding decade. Who can deny that some of the sets in Bing's musicals from that studio have a cardboard look? Location shooting was down to an absolute minimum whilst the studio sound stages were furnished only sufficiently to set a scene. When America went to war in the 1940's Congress placed a limit on the amount of money a film studio could spend on sets and there is evidence that Paramount had been operating within that limit for many years previously. The policy of keeping down expenditure was born of necessity because the studio came near to bankruptcy at one stage. Film historians now acknowledge that it was only the popularity of Bing and Mae West that prevented the studio from folding.

One good example of a tight hold being kept on the purse strings is to be be found in "THE BIG BROADCAST OF 1936", made (of course!) in 1935. It was the second of four such Paramount variety show films. To keep costs down, Director Norman Taurog completed what one critic referred to as a "goulash of speciality numbers" in a rather unorthodox if practical mode of operation. He would photograph stage acts whenever they happened to be passing through California during the thirteen months the film was being assembled. Then, as an expedient to present these unrelated pieces of celluloid, Taurog employed a storyline which called on Jack Oakie and Henry Wadsworth to become involved in a plot that allowed them to use an invention known as the radio eye. We would recognise it as a television set. Oakie and Wadsworth are employed by radio station WHY

and the inventors of the radio eye, George Burns and Gracie Allen, turn on the set to demonstrate the gadget in the hope of making a sale. In the end the film deteriorates with what appears to be a tacked on finish featuring an island chase involving rescuing marines and Oakie winning a $250,000 prize in a broadcasting competition.

Crammed into the 97 minutes in which the plot unfolds are appearances by Ethel Merman, Richard Tauber, Ray Noble and his orchestra, and, of course, Bing. As an example of the studio's economy campaign the sequence featuring Ethel Merman singing "The animal in me" with a chorus of elephants was filmed for another Paramount Crosby/Merman film, "WE'RE NOT DRESSING" (1934). Fortunately Bing's four minute contribution was original. He walked from a log cabin to the side of a lake to sing "I wished on the moon" on a set bathed in studio induced moonlight.

The story behind the subsequent commercial recording of the song for Decca is legendary. On August 14th, 1935, Bing sang a vocal chorus to what was otherwise a dance band arrangement by the Jimmy Dorsey orchestra. Record Producer Jack Kapp wanted Bing to give a full vocal rendition similar to the version in "THE BIG BROADCAST OF 1936". Bing won, but not before an argument recorded for posterity and either prized or loathed by Bing collectors. The argument is available on disc on the limited edition album "FOR COLLECTORS ONLY" or the recent 'Curtain Calls' album "BOTH SIDES OF BING CROSBY", whilst the commercially unsuccessful recording of "I wished on the moon" is available on microgroove on Brunswick's "BING'S HOLLYWOOD" series, volume one: "EASY TO REMEMBER".

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The man that started everybody talking when he made the movies talk nearly 50 years ago was Al Jolson. The subject of a biography written by Michael Freedland and simply stated "JOLSON". Bing has always been full of praise for Jolie and although vocal similaries are not apparent, Bing has credited Jolson with being one of his prime influences. The book is a very broad career study of the "immodest" man that referred to himself as "The World's Greatest Entertainer", a statement acknowledged by Freedland. Where the careers of Bing and Al crossed, the facts are documented. For me, some of the finest hours of radio entertainment and found in the Philco Radio Time and Chesterfield Shows on which Jolson was Bing's guest. As Freedland rightly states: "Jolson was not just good on the show (an early 1947 Philco show), he was as brilliant as he had ever been on Broadway". The audience loved the Bing and Al duets and Jolson received $10,000 for each of four shows following his Philco debut. The shows' ratings reached their peak when Jolson guested on two successive weeks. The programme even spawned badges being issued to people who had seen "THE JOLSON STORY" more than 10 times. The inspiration for the badge publicity came out of the following radio show dialogue:

BING: "What's that badge on your lapel?"
JOLSON:"That's what you get for seeing 'THE JOLSON STORY' a hundred times".

And, on a later programme:

BING: "What's that, Al? The badge with the letters A.J.T.W.G.E."
JOLSON:"That, son, says 'Al Jolson, The World's Greatest Entertainer'".

Jolson's musical director, Morris Stoloff, used to be present at the Philco recordings. Although Jolson paid Stoloff for being an advisor, Stoloff did not involve himself in any way because Bing insisted on John Scott Trotter retaining absolute control.

In May of 1948 Bing's agents tried to sign Jolson for a further 10 programmes to be broadcast that autumn, but the parties could not agree over the question of Jolson's fee. It took a change of sponsor - Philco to Chesterfield - before the team were re-united on Crosby's radio show, although Bing guested on Jolson's radio show in the interim.

Devotees of both Crosby and Jolson will know by now that tapes of these radio programmes can be obtained from the "BING" Tape Service run by Bob Roberts. The other commercial for this quarter's contribution: Should anyone want a copy of Freedland's book then please drop me a line. The American hardback edition published by Stein and Day, New York, at $8.95 and autographed by the author is available at £3.50 post free from me at 55 Long Ridge, Rastrick, Brighouse, West Yorkshire, HD6 3RZ.

THAT DREADED DESERT ISLAND

JOHN BIGNELL chooses his eight records for companionship....

Well, here it is at last - the long-promised select list of all-time great Bing recordings which would conceivably keep me sane whilst awaiting rescue from a desert island. But before I reveal my final choice, let me say that my original list of possible discs numbered 50 and ranged from "Muddy water" (1927) to "Tie a yellow ribbon" (1973)!

In reaching the final selection, I found it very difficult to omit such classics as Bing's first solo, "Muddy water", his definitive effort with the Rhythm Boys, "So the bluebirds and the blackbirds", everything from 1931 with Arnheim, and many more which just missed making the final selection.

So without more ado, here's the list:-

(1) IT MUST BE TRUE (recorded 1930 with Gus Arnheim)
I was astonished that this number did not seem to figure in the lists submitted a couple of years ago when this feature was a regular part of the magazine. It is the classic example of the very early Crosby, bursting on the scene with an entirely new concept of popular singing and one of the earliest, if not the very first example, of the use of phrasing.

(2) WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS (recorded 1931 with Gus Arnheim)
I have enthused at length over this recording before, so I'll content myself this time by saying that it is still my very favourite Crosby number, and the one above all others which sums up all the pleasure this man has brought me for 35 years.

(3) DID YOU EVER SEE A DREAM WALKING? (recorded 1933 with Lennie Hayton)
Here's another one from the very early days - the great days - but long before hearing Bing's version I always considered it to be an average number. I remember hearing it in my early childhood days, played on Henry Hall's teatime broadcasts. When I heard Bing's version for the first time on the Hallmark LP, it reminded me of the impact his "Red sails in the sunset" also made on me in comparison with previous versions by other artistes.

(4) I'M HUMMIN', I'M WHISTLIN', I'M SINGIN' (recorded 1934 with Georgie Stoll)
I've selected this one from the three tremendous numbers featured in "SHE LOVES ME NOT". It short-headed "Love in bloom" and "Straight from the shoulder", although I'd love to take all three - wonderful melodies!

(5) DOWN BY THE RIVER (recorded 1935 with Georgie Stoll)
Again I had to make a heart-rending decision between this and its compatriots, "Soon" and "Easy to remember". All, of course, from "MISSISSIPPI", which I first saw in 1947 and I remember still the thrill of hearing these wonderful numbers - three block-busters and all in one film!

(6) MOONBURN (recorded 1935 with Georgie Stoll)
Stoll has done very well in this list. I am conscious that some great accompanists have been left out (Whiteman and Young being prime examples) but it just happens that Georgie Stoll was around when my final selection was made.

(7) BASIN STREET BLUES (recorded 1937 with John Scott Trotter and the fabulous Miss Connee Boswell)
I am grieved that there is no room in this list for such great buddies and beaus as the Mills Brothers, the Andrews Sisters, Bob Hope and Johnny Mercer, but under no circumstances could I leave out Connee. Of all Bing's memorable duets with her I place this one in first spot. The part where Connee takes the lead and Bing hums and 'boo-boo-boos' must almost reach perfection in harmony!

(8) WALKING THE FLOOR OVER YOU (recorded 1942 with Bob Crosby)
I've always liked this one and it's particularly pleasing to have brother Bob and his great bunch of jazz musicians along too! Nothing extraordinary about the lyrics or tune but it's very catchy and I always imagine that everyone enjoyed making this record.

Well, there you have it. It's no good sorrowing over some of the standards left out, but in the true Roy Plomlet tradition I would crave one luxury item. It would be another record! To remind me of my beloved North Greenford United Football Club (from whom I would not want to be parted for long) I would like to take Bing's recording of "Once more the blue and white" (1950 with Victor Young) - my Club's colours and a wonderful song for putting the boys in the right mood before a game (sounds pretty good after we've won, too!)

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EDITOR's comments: John Bignell's article prompted the wife and I to make our own Desert Island choice, so having tearfully omitted dozens of cherished favourites, here are the final selections. Sue's first, followed by my own...

LOVABLE (1928, Whiteman)
A BENCH IN THE PARK (1930, Whiteman, RB and Brox Sisters)
I SURRENDER, DEAR (1931, Arnheim)
JUNE IN JANUARY (1934, Stoll)
APRIL PLAYED THE FIDDLE (1940, Trotter)
IF YOU LOVE ME (I WON'T CARE) (1954, Trotter)
THE CALL OF THE SOUTH (1953, Matlock, Gary Crosby)
GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK (1960, Halloran)

I'M WAITING FOR SHIPS THAT NEVER COME IN (1940, Trotter)
LULLABY (CRADLE SONG. BRAHMNS) (1941, Trotter)
O LORD, I AM NOT WORTHY (1949, Organ, Darby)
OH, TELL MY WHY (1954, Trotter)
SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT (1955, Weston)
JOHNNY APPLESEED (1957, Norman)
GREEN GROW THE LILACS (1959, Thompson, Rosemary Clooney)
HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING/IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR (1962, Thompson, Halloran, Matz)

(P.S. I hope I won't be accused of cheating with the final item! One luxury? - tapes of all the other 1,000-plus titles and the machine to play 'em on!)

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JOHN BIGNELL continues:-
And here's the promised list of eight great post-war numbers by Bing....

SIOUX CITY SUE (1945, Haggart)
CHATTANOOGIE SHOE SHINE BOY (1950, Schoen)
SAILING DOWN THE CHESAPEAKE BAY (1952, Trotter)
DOWN AMONG THE SHELTERING PALMS (1957, Scobey)
MAMA LOVES PAPA (1957, Scobey)
LONESOME ME (1963, Justis)
WABASH CANNON BALL (1963, Justis)
SUNFLOWER (1963, Justis)

Finally, just to stir some friendly interest and controversy, here is a selection of eight numbers that I would only take to bury!

TEMPTATION (1933, Hayton) - and, for good measure, the '45 and '54 versions.
SEPTEMBER SONG (1943, Trotter)
I PROMISE YOU (1944, Trotter)
THE DAY AFTER FOREVER (1944, Trotter)
TOO-RA-LOO-RA-LOO-RAL (1944, Trotter)
WE'LL GATHER LILACS (1945, Camarata)
SYMPHONY (1945, Young)
BLUE SKIES (1946, Trotter)

No "Bebop Spoken Here" in this list because I've never heard it!

One last word - I've left out from the list of great post-war numbers one of Bing's very best efforts - "Friendly Mountains" (1947, Young). Ah! well - it's all Bing's fault for producing so many fabulous records during the last 30 years!

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As a matter of interest, in August 1969, BOB ROBERTS wrote: In my view, Bing's greatest ever session was with Jimmy Greer on June 9, 1933, when he recorded

"Learn to croon", "Moonstruck", "My love" and "I've got to pass your house". "Learn to croon" was listed as rejected for more than thirty years but was recently found on Japanese 'Lucky' label."

With five more years of recordings to Bing's credit since those words were written, we're wondering if Bob's view has remained unchanged?

Finally, it's worth mentioning once again the record which FRANK MURPHY rates as being Bing's finest performance, namely "I found a million dollar baby (in a five and ten cent store)" - 1931 version.

As they shout in the fairgrounds, "Every one a winner"....

BING TOPICS FROM HULL - or HIGH WATER!

by ALF FARROW

Whilst on holiday in Great Yarmouth early September 1974, my wife and I went to the Windmill Theatre to see "LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR", a stage version of the TV series. Imagine my surprise and delight when before the first act we heard the voice of Bing singing the title song. This happened at the beginning of each subsequent act and my surprise was due to the fact that the TV series has Stuart Gillies singing the title song. Incidentally, it was the Buddy Cole version at Yarmouth and it made my night!

Donny McLoud of "Pebble Mill at One", in a recent interview with Bob Hope in Hollywood, reminded Bob of the making of a 'ROAD' film in England and showed a scene from "ROAD TO HONG KONG". You never know where Bing is going to turn up next! Also in a recent "Pebble Mill at One", Roy Hudd claimed that Billy Williams was the first singer to record on Edison Bell cylinder records - a kind of 1880-1890 Bing Crosby!

Jack Haley, Jnr. in a "Cinema" programme said that more films such as "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" were planned in Hollywood and quite likely, Paramount would be following suit with scenes from their musicals. Should this happen, of course, Bing would be most prominent. How could they leave him out? He even won a place in "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" with "Going Hollywood" and a word or two of narration. I listened to the radio programme of this film recently and I'm looking forward to viewing it when it comes to Hull.

Michael Parkinson, in one of his programmes, said that Bing was last here he declined the use of a laid-on car to the studio. Bing prefers to hail a taxi in the street and most times when the drivers recognise him they will not accept payment! Parkinson says that is the sign of a true super-star.

In a recent Tom and Jerry cartoon on television, Tom gave out with a blistering version of "Is you is or is you ain't ma baby?", and whilst sitting in the cinema the other day waiting for "AIRPORT '75" to commence, Mantovani entertained us on record with his beautiful version of "True Love" - who could ask for more?

Mention of "True Love" reminds me of a recent incident in a local shop. I was waiting to be served in one of our leading decorating shops and faintly whistling this tune to myself. When it came my turn to be served, the assistant commented, "Isn't that a lovely song you were whistling?" I agreed, and then asked her if she liked hearing Bing singing it. "I like nobody else singing it - he's marvellous, isn't he" came her reply, but when I asked her if she was interested in joining the ICC she declined to answer. So there it is - like lots of others, this lady thought that Bing was great, but that is as far as it goes. They don't know what they're missing!

Christmas week was good to me because I picked up two LP's and excellent ones too. "WHITE CHRISTMAS" with Waring and Sinatra on UK 'Midi' MID 34013, plus London LGK 137, "THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES AND A CHRISTMAS STORY" reviewed elsewhere in this month's issue. Woolworths were giving the former album plenty of playing time as I walked around and I spied a chap looking at the sleeve as I neared the record counter. I couldn't help saying what a good buy it was - so he bought it!

Well, that's all for another time, so cheers for now!

Footnote: "WHITE CHRISTMAS" (Midi MID 34013) is a re-issue of the original Reprise album, "12 SONGS OF CHRISTMAS" - now deleted. (refer to the LP-OGRAPHY)

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS ON ... An Anniversary Review of the ICC

SPECIAL FEATURE

by BERT BISHOP

Way, way back in 1950 when 78's still reigned supreme and extended-play and long-play records seemed just a flexible flight of fancy, Bing's latest version of "Where the Blue of the Night", available in the USA for nearly five years, was readily available from the Crosby section of the record shops' shelving. It was racked with long-standing favourites, selections from "TOP O' THE MORNING", a couple of new and potential top sellers for Bing and the Andrews Sisters, and very soon what was to be Bing's 21st and penultimate million-seller Gold Record Award disc, "Sam's song"/"Play a Simple Melody", which distinction he shared on this record with his son, Gary Crosby. "THE ADVENTURES OF ICHABOD AND MR. TOAD" was amusing Disney fans of all ages around the smaller towns, whilst in London and the provinces "RIDING HIGH" was the latest cinema fare for followers of a nearly 20 years regular flow of Bing Crosby films.

It was in such an atmosphere of Crosby activity that what is now the INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE first found its origins. A little earlier in the year than the arrival of "RIDING HIGH" (March 1950) Leslie Gaylor, one of our Publicity Officers and, surely, Bing's most persistant and faithful promoter contacted a few Bing fans around the country and founded the BRITISH BING CLUB. Now, as older members will rightly assert, there had been earlier clubs and associations; small groups of lads and lasses joined by a common bond, and even schoolday sessions at the homes of proud owners of Victrola portables and the rarer delights of the rather grand radiograms of the day. Alf Farrow touches nostalgically on this aspect in an article which forms part of this anniversary issue; but here we are tracing the achievements and expansion of our Circle from its humble beginnings to the international status which it now enjoys.

Leslie Gaylor: "I recall contacting Frank Murphy and a fellow named Arthur N. Allen, who I believe said he would get things going for a club. We had a fourth stalwart in Mrs. Dorothy Hardiman, and somehow we all got together and the BRITISH BING CLUB was formed."

Arthur Allen was the 'leading light' and Leslie took on the role of Vice-President. Other officers were constituted and soon the magazine, "CROSBYANA", was circulating among a growing band of enthusiasts, with the four instigators keeping things humming on the air-waves and collating material for the modest magazine.

Leslie Gaylor: "We did plenty of plugging - I know I did - on the gold-lettered headed note-paper we had then. Always contacting 'dee-jays' and record programme producers and getting Bing records played on Radio Luxemburg, and through Teddy Johnson and, later, Pete Murray. I also had a number of letters printed in the music and film magazines of the day. We did some record researching and Arthur Allen conveyed to me the news that he definitely had the alternate 'take' to the UK Brunswick issue "Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Shean"! Soon, Frank Murphy took the helm and did a very good job."

Dorothy Hardiman became President and Frank Murphy took over as Vice-President and Editor of the magazine, now re-named the "CROSBY POST", with a bi-monthly publication schedule. No mean achievement even though the magazine was still of a modest natire insofar as size and scope were concerned. But it kept members in touch and was instrumental in the spreading of the Crosby gospel to new ones. In the March 1954 Anniversary issue, Frank Murphy wrote:-

"Editing this magazine is a great strain on the strongest nerves. If it were not for such stalwart associates as Jean Rainey, Dot Hardiman and Colin Pugh I feel sure I would have been sued for libel and many other forms of court action....

As this is our anniversary I would like to reflect on what we have

accomplished since our inauguration in March 1950. We started with a monthly news-letter and a quarterly journal called "CROSBYANA", which I typed, stencilled and duplicated in what, I must admit, was a far from clear manner. Reg Davis gave the Club a boost when he took over the journal editorship - adding a more professional touch. But owing to pressure of business he had to relinquish that office and I once again took over, attempting what you now see each month - "CROSBY POST".

I could not continue without Jean Rainey; we see eye-to-eye on everything to do with Bing and the Club. Jean attends to all the monetary matters, sends you your monthly "CROSBY POST" and those photographs that we occasionally try to get you from the United States of America....and many more things. We are grateful to Dot Hardiman whom we could not manage without, and last, but not least, Colin Pugh, who is a very good counsel plus!"

It was around 1954 that the 'BBC' - BRITISH BING CLUB - changed its name, to avoid, perhaps, some confusion with a larger organisation, to the BRITISH CROSBY SOCIETY and soldiered on with an increasing membership and annual meetings in London, often in members' homes. There was plenty to write and talk about, for Bing films were still a regular event - "LITTLE BOY LOST", "WHITE CHRISTMAS", "THE COUNTRY GIRL", "ANYTHING GOES", "HIGH SOCIETY", "MAN ON FIRE" and "SAY ONE FOR ME" - oh, yes, the 'fifties' were still vintage years for the 'Celluloid Crosby' (to borrow Keith Parkinson's coined heading for his currently regular "BING" column). It was also in the fourth year of the club, too, that Bing recorded his best-selling "Musical Autobiography" and from then on the LP collections and albums came thick and fast. Children's story songbooks, the commencement of the ubiquitous 'singalongs' and, of course, the great tie-up with Rosemary Clooney on film, radio and record; which was something of a coincidence, for that March 1954 anniversary issue of the "CROSBY POST" had carried an enquiry from Derek Palmer, the then new President of the new Rosemary Clooney Fan Club asking for information on how to run a fan club!

As a result of such bristling activity a liason was set up with the Crosby Office, and ere long, with their blessing, Bing was made President, Larry Crosby Vice-President, with the previously mentioned officers adopting the roles of Active Vice-Presidents, Secretary, and in the case of Colin Pugh, 'Discologist' and Record Reviewer. William Taylor also held that exacting though pleasurable post for a while. Arthur Allen and Sheila Willett sketched the "CROSBY POST" covers, and publicity was in the hands of Stan White, Ted Laker and, in the USA, Mrs. Pat Sullivan.

These were the official officers during those halcyon years when so many new films and new recordings were being regularly released, and when practically all of Bing's recorded repetoire was still in the catalogues. Such a largesse of Crosbyana for all to enjoy - no wonder the Society grew from strength to strength, collecting along the way such talented Honorary Members as Norman Wisdom, Ted Ray, Reginald Dixon, Jack Buchanan, Alan Ladd and, later, Michael Holliday. Articles and greetings from these worthies were to be found among the pages of the magazine to the credit of all concerned. Film shows were arranged in London by courtesy of Ron Davies, and record sales lists, auctions and quiz pages were staple fare for an ever widening circle of friends and members.

As the desire grew to collate Bing's recorded and radio output into a statistical and accurate reality, the magazine began to be sprinkled with the names of long-standing members: Jack Manners, Frank Grant, Eric Griffiths, Charlie Tupper, Eric Jackson, Johnny Jones, George O'Reilly, Bill Taylor, Grace Lambert, Bob and Vera Roberts, Ralph Harding, Derek Parkes, Les Pythian, Reg Bristo and Fred Reynolds, who, incidentally, devised some very entertaining crossword puzzles for members - and here it is regretted that it is impossible to mention every member from those or any subsequent years, many of whom did sterling work for and on behalf of the Society, and to whom apologies are tendered for such omissions.

Listings of LP's, EP's and alternate 'takes' appeared with increasing frequency and must have formed the nucleus of the idea to produce what was the monumental task of collating every known Bing Crosby commercial recording in chronological order, to include master numbers, alternate 'takes' and the labels and countries of issue; plus much subsidiary information relating to the re-

cordings. This work was to be "THE ROAD TO BING CROSBY", published in four parts with a 'V'-Disc supplement. All but part IV were printed and published by the BRITISH CROSBY SOCIETY (1963) and the INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE (1965). The team for this outstanding work were Ralph Harding, Bob Roberts, Derek Parkes and Fred Reynolds with added research by Charles H. Wareing and the late Les Pythian. An American publication, "CROSBY ON RECORD", had preceded these UK volumes but they were to prove far more comprehensive than that useful work.

As the Society swung into the 'sixties' the "CROSBY POST" began to take on a more substantial format, was succinctly set out and boasted regular picture pages in black and white 'photo-stat' style. One such picture shows Bob and Vera Roberts in the famous 'Crosby Room' at Bob's home in Chatham. Society membership cards were issued, tastefully printed and showing a small inset photograph of Bing in what appears to be a 'still' from the film "WELCOME STRANGER". This might be mere coincidence but it would have been most apposite for new members who, from being 'loners', had come in from the cold. By now the Society was associated with the AMERICAN CLUB CROSBY, President Mrs. Rena Albanesi, and the CROSBY BROTHERS FAN CLUB, President Mrs. Priscilla Koernig: more Honorary Members were enrolled in Charles Graves, Ken Sykora, Geoff Milne, Georgie Wood and Buddy Cole. News of the Society was becoming well established beyond the parochial boundaries of the UK and spreading to other lands.

Frank Murphy: "In 1966 we changed the name again, to the INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE because by this time the interest in Bing was really becoming exceptionally tremendous as far as club activities were concerned. We were enrolling members all over the world: places like Poland even; Australia, which had a formidable Crosby following; Canada; America; Israel. We felt we could be no longer known as the BRITISH BING CLUB or the BRITISH CROSBY SOCIETY because we were so international. So we became the INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE with Bing's blessing. He was so pleased about this when we wrote and asked him if we could change the name. He gave it his blessing and a letter of authority to do this".

With the change of name of the Society there also came further changes. That most important part of the Society, the magazine, was given the title "BING" and it was decided to issue it in larger format and less frequently - every quarter. Bing's activities in the recording field had dropped drastically, and there were only four issued recordings in the years 1966 and 1967, of which two were not released in the UK. Likewise with films; just two full-length features in the 'sixties' with a third - and so far his last (and narry a song in that) - in the making, during which was a crucial period for the ICC. There were some policy differences as a result of which a break-away society, the International Society of Crosby Collectors (ISCC) was formed by Ralph Harding, who commenced publishing a small record magazine called the "Crosby Collector". Some little time later the differences were resolved amicably and the two societies ran an almost parallel course until the, by now, substantial and colourful issues of the "Crosby Collector" ceased publication with its December 1972 issue.

Bing had turned his attention more to the 'small screen' and during the late 'sixties' hosted well over 20 "Hollywood Palace" shows as well as guesting in many others, which at least gave some current activity 'copy' for Editor Frank Murphy. Quite likely as a direct result of the shortage of new LP's, it was decided that the ICC should issue its own! This was quite an ambitious project; but was, at least, less hampered by the strict copyright laws which now prevail in this country.

There were two LP's issued: "BING CROSBY'S ALL-STAR CHESTERFIELD SHOW", All Star Products ASP LP2000, featured 'air-shots' culled from the Chesterfield programmes which Bing hosted, and which spanned a period of scarcely more than two years at the start of the 1950's; and "BING CROSBY'S ALL-STAR PHILCO SHOW", All Star Products ASP LP2001, reached back to the mid-1940's with another rare selection of 'air-shots'. These two 12" albums were well received, being of good fidelity and having attractive black and white photo' sleeves.

A number of 7" LP's and EP's were also released: Vol. 6 (EP) was entitled "BING CROSBY AT THE HOLLYWOOD PALACE" (1967) on which 'the incomparable Bing

Crosby' sang a truly lovely "Sunrise, sunset" among some jolly numbers. Vol. 7 (LP) was entitled "THE T.V. MR. BING", featuring extracts from the shows of Andy Williams and Dean Martin, and on Vol. 8 (LP) a very young 'groaner' was resurrected in a collection called "BING CROSBY IN THE MACK SENNETT DAYS" - all sound-track songs from his early two-reelers.

"BING'S PERSONAL MESSAGE TO THE ICC" (26th May 1966) was issued on Vol. 9 (EP) and was the last in a very worthwhile series of private pressings made solely on a non-profit making basis for society members.

In issuing these recordings the ICC maintained a consistancy of activity in a not otherwise spectacular period of its history. The principle area of effort in the UK was in the Midlands and Northern Counties where Michael Crampton held, and still does, his annual get-togethers of members in Leeds. Firstly in his home, but since his comparatively recent marriage, in a hall. These informal gatherings, to which all members are welcome, are the highlight of the ICC year for those able to attend. Greetings by way of letters and taped messages are sent to that function from many quarters; not the least of which is invariably one from Bing.

During all this time constant liason with overseas contingents of Crosby buffs was maintained - in the 'Down Under' continent can be found some of Bing's most loyal supporters; Shirley Naylor and chaps like Johnny Purches, Keith Hyde, Gordon Wall, Henry Hollow, Ross Deere, Bob Machliss and Ron Daniels: the hard core of Crosbyana from Australasia, where great things have been achieved for collectors everywhere. In the USA Priscilla Koernig and Pat Sullivan with Helen Tolton, Jack Souther, Fred Romary, 'Wig' Wiggins, Ken Gray, and many, many more kept the records and tape trade flowing across the Atlantic in both directions; for at one time there was a greater galaxy of Bing releases in the UK than anywhere else in the world - as yet the 'pirate labels' of mainly Stateside origin were less abundant.

In 1968 the truly international team of Frank Murphy (UK), Jean Paul Frerault (Canada), Keith Hyde (Australia) and Fred Romary (USA) produced and published "THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY". This was a year by year listing of all of Bing's recordings, giving dates and mastering numbers. Based on the files originally maintained back in the 1950's by Leslie Gaylor, this invaluable publication proved a boon to collectors not in possession of the earlier four volume discography.

In 1970, after 20 years as the UK mainstay of the now-called ICC, Frank Murphy found it necessary through domestic circumstances to resign from all office, and the circle's duplicator and membership files were handed over to Reg Bristo who undertook the formidable task of Secretary and of licking into shape an editorial team. At that time, John Bassett, a member of both the ICC and the ISCC was Assistant Editor to Fred Tetlow's magazine, "SQUARE ONE"; he also wrote for the "GUNN REPORT", and other magazines, articles on vintage record collecting in general and Bing Crosby in particular. Being a 'Monotype' keyboard operator and concerned with the setting out of all kinds of advertising material and books, John seemed to Reg an ideal choice as Editor of "BING", with Reg continuing as he had been doing in contributing his own section, operating the duplicator and distribution of the magazine. This among all the other chores of Secretaryship.

In the event, John Bassett accepted the Editor's chair, and with "BING"-21 (February 1971) a new chapter of the ICC began. Most of the old team were on hand either as Representatives (such as Samuel Sternberg from Israel, and many of the aforementioned overseas members) or as contributors of regular articles (such as Keith Parkinson, Alf Farrow and Michael Crampton in particular). Lee Argent came on the scene as a Publicity Officer, and staunch support was enlisted for behind-the-scenes work from Edward Hale. Other fine articles were also contributed from time to time by Peter Diffley, Edward Towler and Richard Muirhead.

That same year, 1971, brought to fruition the publication of "THE A TO Z OF BING CROSBY". This was an alphabetically arranged title listing of every commercially issued Crosby recording, showing year of recording and musical and vocal accompaniment. It began life as a personal index and its publication was presented in that format, compiled by myself and Editor John. Two years later, a little later off the launching pad than originally intended, came "THE BING CROSBY LP-OGRAPHY" (1st Edition). The brain-child of John Bassett,

this publication is unique in its comprehensive listing of every known (at that time) LP that features Bing in any way. It was rightly well-received; and here again a second edition is planned for early 1976 in order to keep members as accurately informed and up-to-date with the LP scene as is possible.

Before the year 1973 had passed us by, all of Bing's personal messages, along with other interesting items lasting one hour, were offered on a five inch reel or cassette tape; and this proved a welcome addition to many a tape collection. Offered with it was a 3½" open reel entitled "DICK SINGS BING", on which member, Richard Lillico, creditably sang a number of songs indelibly associated with Bing - Dick won the ICC competition for the member who could sing most like the musically mellifluous Mr. C.

1974 was a crucial year for Bing, the ICC members and anyone who had an interest in the 'Old Groaner'. It is known that Bing wishes to forget that unhappy year of his illness, so there will be no harping on the subject except to say that how happy everyone was when Bing pulled through and went on to star in two TV shows and make, as yet, an unissued recording or two.

That year also saw the publication of the second edition of "THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY"; completely revised under a new team which included myself, John Bassett and Leslie Gaylor. There shortly followed "AN ENGLISH '78' NUMBERS/TITLES LISTING"; basically the excellent work of Jim Hayes, which gave collectors a quick and easy reference to all the UK releases on shellac (602 known issues, to date). All these publications gave, and will continue to give through constant updating and revision, a complete reference to every aspect of discographical research relating to Bing's near-on 50 years of recording.

The year was rounded off with Bing's personal message to the ICC on tape which has also been made available to members on either open-reel or cassette. Recorded in mid-October at the request of Editor John, Bing spoke for six minutes on a variety of topics, adding: "May I once again thank you all for your support and for your interest in what I have done in the past, and what I propose to do in the immediate future".

What then of the future? It is known that Bing has, and will be making more recordings to the delight of us all; for it is a certainty that he will want to round off his wonderful career with 50 unbroken years of recorded releases. That being so, the ICC - which is you, its members - looks confidently to the future in the knowledge that in the final analysis it will have been the greatest supporter of the most popular singer-actor-entertainer-personality of this or any other age. It does so from a standpoint of a never stronger and healthier membership; perhaps, like most in this day and age, not without some financial headache; but with a wealth of talent and experience that will carry it forward with continuous achievements that Leslie Gaylor and friends might never have dreamed of a quarter-of-a-century ago.

For myself, I am very happy to be associated with such a grand and cordial circle of friends, and anticipate with pleasure the next 25 years of a united ICC and a wealth of listening pleasure.

BERT BISHOP

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ALF FARROW writes:

Memories - nostalgia ... two words which are associated by virtue of memories being of the mind - travelling backwards to far away times - and nostalgia which envelopes one's mind in a rosy red mist, blotting out the hardness of the modern world and giving one great satisfaction and sincere pleasure in recalling those times.

I can recall in the 1930's getting up at 3.30 a.m. to listen to Bing over Schenectady on a home-made three valve short-wave radio run by an eliminator, an accumulator and a high-tension battery. I daresay those words bring back memories to some of you! On certain mornings the programme came over quite clear but others were spoiled by static, depending on the weather over the Atlantic. I can't remember now which songs I used to hear Bing sing (I did make notes but they were all lost during the second war) except for one, entitled "Pretty Redwing". I know that Ninian Faichney in Falkirk has had the same experience and I wonder if any other members did the same?

I can recall, also in the 1930's, seeing "WAIKIKI WEDDING" and listening to Bing making "Sweet Leilani" the smash hit that it was. Upon leaving the cinema I went into the record shop next door and asked the lady in charge if she would put the record aside for me to collect when I had saved up enough to pay for it! (2/6d. - or to be modern, 12½p.) She did!

I also recall in 1939 taking over as Secretary of the then "ORIGINAL BING CROSBY FRIENDSHIP CLUB" and the immense thrill I got upon receiving letters from Bing and Larry. One letter from Bing was typewritten for the most part, but at the end Bing hand wrote: "We are pulling for the Allies". From mid-1939 to mid-1940 I used to visit a member's home in Hull for the purpose of printing and compiling our small magazine. Hull boasted about six members at that time and if we all attended these magazine nights, the work went like wildfire to the good-humoured taunts of the visited member's brothers. Her name was Flo Fisher and she was one of the great arteries of the club.

Since joining the ICC I have had the great pleasure in meeting some very informative colleagues, as well as having some great times in Leeds. I recall one Saturday morning whilst I was on holiday, my son coming to me saying that Frank Murphy wanted me on the telephone. Wondering what it was all about I hurried to the phone to be told that Bing was in London and would I like to speak to him? Would I? Frank had spoken to him earlier and mentioned that I would have liked to speak to him, so I made the call. My son didn't believe me until he could hear Bing's voice, but I need not have been so tongue-tied as I thought I might have been because Bing is so easy to talk to. A most memorable occasion and one that I shall remember always.

And then the wonderful experience of seeing and hearing Bing in person in the "PARKINSON" show. When we were waiting for the studio doors to open, I recall seeing Bing under the lights of the studio with his hat tilted on the back of his head, sitting, like all the world, just as if he was at a session in the late 30's. A picture that the memory cherishes for ever! I missed meeting and shaking hands with him by a mere six hours after the show but that is another story. I still live in the hope of meeting him - sometime, somewhere.

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FRANK MURPHY writes:

I was privileged in joining the original group, the BRITISH BING CLUB, way back in December 1950. The brochure I received from Leslie Gaylor who was then Vice-President of the group related how the club had been formed in March of that year, so in a way I felt that I was one of the founder members of our long-standing group. I still have the tattered copy of my first "CROSBYANA" magazine with articles by some of the then organisers, Arthur Aiken, Jean Rainey and Dot Hardiman.

It was around 1954 that I assumed the editing of "CROSBY POST" for the re-titled club, the BRITISH CROSBY SOCIETY - the organisers felt that the other title clashed with the BBC! Memories of those early years come flooding back.

I well remember the happy occasions I used to visit the home of Bill Taylor in Torrington Square, London, for his Crosby meetings, and the time back in 1955 when he, Ted Laker, Stan White and myself hurried along to King's Cross station to meet Dot Hardiman who was arriving for one such happy event - armed with 10" LP's to identify ourselves!

And the great days at the home of Jack and Kit Manners at Camberwell in London, which became an annual treat prior to the Michael Crampton dates in Leeds. Jack and Kit used to host us all with great enthusiasm and most of the country's celebrated collectors made the regular visits to this homely venue - people like Bob and Vera Roberts, Tony Carpenter, Eric Griffiths, and a host of other renowned enthusiasts.

August 1960 is one of the historic events I'll always recall and the date that Jack Manners and I travelled from his home to the Claridges Hotel, London for our first ever meeting with Bing. Bing introduced us to the photographer of 'DISC' magazine as "the President and the Publicity Officer of my British Fan Club" and we felt like a million dollars - we really did!

The 1960's were far and away the most important Crosby years as far as I was concerned, both for the club and its relations with Bing and his family, for during this decade we were to receive a host of acknowledgements from the

Crosby's which we at the helm counted as honours for our ever-willing efforts. It was, and still is, my proud boast that never did we write to Bing and Larry (and, on occasions, Kathryn) for tapes and requests, etc. without receiving a reply, along with many personal taped messages for our numerous club functions. Photographs flew liberally to our members throughout the world, and when Bing filmed "THE ROAD TO HONG KONG" in England in 1961, almost every fan worthy of the name made the trip to Shepperton Studios and were accorded a personal welcome from the maestro.

The 1970's brought further cameos of Crosbyana and one of the really big highlights for me was the occasion in September 1972 when I visited Bing at the Stafford Hotel in London, and his actually recording before my very eyes three important taped greetings for me - one for my Bingo Club (the 'Empire' in Jarrow, Co.Durham), one for Radio Newcastle, and one for a group of ICC members very dear to me and headed by my close colleague Johnny Jones in Northern Ireland.

But perhaps the proudest moment of my 'Crosby years' was back in 1966 when I took my dear friend Les Phythian to Cockermouth in Cumberland for his first ever meeting with Bing, and I actually took their photograph together. Les passed away shortly after this memorable event, but not before he had sent me a copy of a rare Columbia issue, "Waltzing in a dream" which he knew I had been looking for, together with a charming and appreciative letter which I still treasure and keep enclosed in the cover of that valuable disc.

These, then, are some of my memories of the 25 great years of Crosby activity here in the UK. Through Bing I have made a host of friends throughout the world, and I'm grateful to the people now in charge of the ICC for keeping this wonderful association and that illustrious name alive - and I thank you too for taking time to read my fond memories from the golden years.

FRANK MURPHY

SPECIAL THANKS to Northern Ireland member JACK DOUGAN for supplying us with a copy of 'WEEKEND's January article entitled "When Bing's Life Was In The Balance". Pressure of space prevented us from including the article, the general theme of which was Bing's miraculous recovery from his illness in January 1974 ... was it really that long ago, now? In his accompanying letter, Jack writes: "Although I eagerly thumbed through the pages of the BBC and ITV magazines in December, there was no mention of a Bing film! To say that I was disappointed is putting it mildly! So then I turned to the radio section and saw those thrilling words, 'BING SINGS'. This was on Radio-4, Christmas night. Ten magical minutes from 10.50 to 11.00 p.m. The songs were "Ave Maria", "The Bells of St.Mary's" and "White Christmas". Ten minutes that passed all too quickly, but which, to me, were the highlight of the day. In closing, may I extend to everyone connected with our wonderful Bing club, a very happy and peaceful 1975".
(EDITOR's comments: Jack was lucky to see that tiny entry in the 'RADIO TIMES', for I must admit that I (along with hundreds of others) threw aside my copy, quite convinced that there was no mention of Bing whatsoever! Quite a Bing-less Christmas otherwise, wasn't it?)

THE GUNN REPORT - each issue is packed with record sales and auctions, along with discographical features and lighthearted articles. Always plenty of Bix and Bing, and our good friend Jim Hayes is in there, too! Write for details to:

JOHN GUNN, 15 LYNTON ROAD, HADLEIGH, BENFLEET, ESSEX. (and please mention "BING")

ICC TAPES

The following ICC tapes are still available from the Editor, to whom all orders and remittances should be sent. Please make all cheques, postal orders and IMO's payable to the International Crosby Circle - not to the Editor personally. Increased costs have resulted in a revision of prices, as indicated below:-

(1) "DICK SINGS BING" - Richard Lillico's winning competition entry, in which he impersonates Bing singing the following unaccompanied songs:

It's easy to remember	Ave Maria
I dream of Jeannie	Mississippi mud
Let's take the long way home	Out of nowhere
Sleepy time gal	As long as I'm dreaming
It could happen to you	Blue Hawaii

Price: 65p for 'open-reel' spool (dual track at 3¾ i.p.s.)
75p for cassette.

(2) "THE OFFICIAL ICC TAPE" of Bing's personal messages to the International Crosby Circle, together with other items of particular interest. Details as follows:

(a) Bing's Message to the British Crosby Society, 1956 (1 minute)
(b) Bing's Message to the British Crosby Society, 1957 (12 minutes)
(c) Bing's Message to the International Crosby Circle, 1963 (3 minutes)
(d) Bing's Message to the International Crosby Circle, 1965 (3 minutes)
(e) Bing's Message to the International Crosby Circle, 1965 (8 minutes)
(f) Bing's visit to Spokane:
  (i) Arrival of Bing's plane)
  (ii) Harry Crosby's guitar solo) 9th March 1968
  (iii) Gonzaga University Speech (5 minutes)
(g) Bing's Message to the International Crosby Circle, 1968 (10 minutes)
(h) Radio interview with Bing, 2nd August 1972 (2 minutes)
(i) Radio interview with Bing, 1972 (4 minutes)
(j) Bing's Messages to:
  (i) The Empire Bingo Club, Northumberland (2 minutes)
  (ii) The 1930's Record Club (3 minutes)
  (iii) The International Crosby Circle, 1972 (1 minute)
(k) Transatlantic telephone conversation with Bing, 18th October 1973 (5 minutes)

Note: Bing's messages appear by courtesy of Stan White, Dorothy Hardiman, Frank Murphy, Don Denney and Johnny Jones. It is worth mentioning that item (b) includes a full length song by Bing, namely "All The Time", on which he is accompanied by Buddy Cole at the piano.

Price: 95p for 'open-reel' spool (dual track at 3¾ i.p.s.)
Cassettes by special arrangement only.

(3) "BING'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE" - recorded mid-October 1974 (6 minutes) (by courtesy of John Bassett)

Price: 65p for 'open-reel' spool (dual track at 3¾ i.p.s.)
75p for cassette.

All prices include postage and packing. Please signify 'open-reel' or cassette and include full remittance. At least three weeks should be allowed for delivery.

"PARKINSON" SHOW SOUVENIR! A truly remarkable photograph of Bing is now available to ICC members. Taken with a flash instamatic, this full-colour picture shows Bing departing from the BBC Television Theatre on the occasion of the "PARKINSON" Show, 18th September 1972. This fascinating study can be yours for 25p plus a S.A.E. large enough to hold the 3½" x 4½" photograph. Forward the full remittance for one or more copies (plus S.A.E.) to: HARRY CHEETHAM, 37 EASTFORD SQUARE, COLLYHURST, MANCHESTER, 10.

CROSBYOGRAPHY

Discographical Research conducted by
COLIN PUGH, JIM HAYES and TIM BROOKS

TIM BROOKS (USA) writes: I have been doing some research in the Columbia files here in New York, and recently I discovered the matrix card for that very elusive Bing item, "SOUTHERN MEDLEY". According to the files, the item was recorded on 18 October 1929 as a "personal record for Mr. Whiteman". There are two 'takes' shown, both "O.K.", but no indication of vocalists or individual tunes is given. This was still in the Columbia vaults as of the 1964 inventory. Incidentally, the card heading states "Southern Melodies", not "Southern Medley", but these cards are not necessarily definitive. Additionally, "MOONLIGHT AND ROSES" is also shown as being personally recorded for Whiteman. Again, two 'takes' are listed, both "O.K.", but with no vocalists being named. This item was recorded on 16 October 1929, and was also in the vaults as of the 1964 inventory. Perhaps a judicious appeal could pry it out. Mrs. Martine McCarthy, manager of the archives, has been very helpful in permitting me to extract this information and deserves a lot of credit for her work in preserving and making accessible Columbia's early documentation.

Summary:-

1929

16 Oct.	Moonlight and roses (unissued)	W91790-1
16 Oct.	Moonlight and roses (unissued)	W91790-
*18 Oct.	Old black Joe - Carry me back to old Virginny	W91791-1
18 Oct.	Old black Joe - Carry me back to old Virginny (unissued) (from: "Southern Medley")	W91791-

*commercially released in 1974 on US Pelican LP 104 "BING - SOFT LIGHTS AND SWEET MUSIC". It should be noted here that certain collectors possess a tape dubbing of "Moonlight and roses" take-1.

****

COLIN PUGH (Bristol, UK) writes: In "BINGANG" for June 1974, page 35, Ken Gray lists an interesting discovery that "I can't begin to tell you" is issued with an alternative take to -A. He suggests that all 78 rpm issues are take-A and all microgroove issues are take-? (alternative). However, my collection disproves this theory as follows:-

Take-A		Alternate Take	
De 23457	(78)	De 23457	(45)
Br-E 03624	(78)	De DL 74527	(LP)
Br-E OE 9424	(EP)		
De-E BM 03624	(78)		

You see, I do have a microgroove issue of take-A. The difference between the takes is easily noticed by comparing Carmen Cavallaro's first few bars of introduction at the beginning of the record. As this is a 7 August 1945 recording, I don't think the different versions could be attributed to 'composite' masters, i.e. Bing's vocal dubbed over more than one backing. The 'composite' technique was used more in later years - the Malcolm Lockyer sessions for example, and more recently on "Where the rainbow ends". In fact I believe that on most of Bing's new albums the voice and backing are recorded separately. Once this is done there is no end to the studio tricks!

****

The EDITOR writes: When an unexpected discovery threatens to destroy claims made by others in the past that "no stone has been left unturned", it is little wonder that adverse comment should be made about our announcement of one such 'find' in the last issue. Not surprisingly, it is Fred Reynolds (joint compiler of "The Road to Bing Crosby" discography) who critically puts pen to paper in order to express his opinion within this magazine.

Fred writes: "Not the least interesting feature of the last magazine was the article about the discovery of a new Bing recording. I have made some enquiries and have been provided with information by one of the world's leading Bix/White-

man experts. He has confirmed that Bix Beiderbecke did not take any part in the recording, as it was made before Beiderbecke joined the Whiteman organisation. The cornet work is that of Henry Busse. The Victor recording sheet shows that the vocal was by Gaylord, Fulton and Austin "Skin" Young, the latter taking lead voice. In the past, confusion has arisen over mistaken identity where Bing and "Skin" Young were concerned. Little has been said about the small debt that Bing's phrasing technique owed to Young's influence but it is, nonetheless, real. Young, of course, preceded Bing into the Whiteman band and one doesn't have to try very hard to imagine that Bing would have sung some of Young's vocals in much the same way - listen, for example, to "Ma Belle" (HMV B 5807)."

EDITOR's reply: If, as Fred maintains, we are confusing the voice of Austin "Skin" Young with that of Bing, then I can only suggest that he and his colleagues listen again to many of their so-called Crosby vocals which have found their way into the 'ROAD' discography. Having listened to "Ma Belle", it is certainly not difficult to appreciate that Young sings the lead vocal on "Ooh! Maybe It's You". This fact we already suspected, and we are grateful to Fred for confirming that particular point. But the suggestion that it is also Young's voice that we hear singing the preceding and concluding part-solo (indicated clearly in the last issue) must, I feel, be regarded as nonsensical. In my opinion, the two voices on this recording are entirely different, and if any members choose to dismiss this title as being a non-Bing item, then it will be their loss. As stated in December, the recording will now be listed in all future ICC discographical publications as being an unmistakeable Bing Crosby vocal. We leave the final word to BERT BISHOP who strikes at the very heart of the matter with these closing comments:-

After listening to "Ooh! Maybe It's You" I'm bound to say that this record is as typical of Bing with his singing confreres as any of similar genre which we have been led to believe as being authentic Crosby. There is certainly more aural evidence of him on here than on, for example, "La Paloma", "Constantinople", "La Golondrina" or "Missouri Waltz". It seems to me that a thorough investigation into all the Whiteman recordings of that era is called for.

****

The following amendments to the MINI-DISCOGRAPHY (second edition) have been supplied by COLIN PUGH:-

page 9 16 Sept. Please delete: (test) (unissued) from entry. SF 11-AA

page 8 addition: 12 June Many happy returns of the day LA 1042-AB

page 9 addition: 26 Jan. I've got the world on a string (test) (unissued) B 12991-B

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JIM HAYES writes: With reference to the 'skeletal' listing of Bing's English 7" 45 rpm SPs and EPs (issue 36 of "BING"), please incorporate the following additions and corrections, kindly supplied by Colin Pugh:-

7" 45 rpm SPs
delete: London 45 HLD 9228 (This is a non-Bing item)
add: Reprise R 20424

7" 45 rpm EPs
delete: RCA SEC 7013
insert: RCA SRC 7013
add: Brunswick OE 9421, OE 9422, OE 9430, and Warner Brothers WSEP 2050.

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A 'SKELETAL' LISTING OF BING on IRISH COLUMBIA 10" 78 rpm compiled by JIM HAYES:

IDB 56 (as UK Columbia DB 2068)	IDB 75 (as UK Columbia DB 1964)
IDB 57 (" " " DB 2056)	IDB 76 (" " " DB 1894)
IDB 73 (" " " DB 2043)	IDB 77 (" " " DB 1945)
IDB 74 (" " " DB 1985)	IDB 78 (" " " DB 1829)

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A 'SKELETAL' LISTING OF BING on IRISH BRUNSWICK 10" 78 rpm compiled by JIM HAYES:

EO 1166	EO 2873	EO 3321	EO 3603	EO 3779
EO 2694	EO 2881	EO 3326	EO 3604	EO 3783
EO 2713	EO 2890	EO 3350	EO 3618	EO 3794
EO 2714	EO 2900	EO 3355	EO 3624	EO 3800
EO 2718	EO 2973	*EO 3387	EO 3633	EO 3801
EO 2733	EO 2974	EO 3396	EO 3634	EO 3809
EO 2746	EO 2978	EO 3418	EO 3635	EO 3813
EO 2753	EO 3010	EO 3456	EO 3636	EO 3822
EO 2761	EO 3019	EO 3485	EO 3646	EO 3837
EO 2768	EO 3087	EO 3510	EO 3647	EO 3838
EO 2779	EO 3127	EO 3528	EO 3650	EO 3839
EO 2786	EO 3142	EO 3533	EO 3651	EO 3882
EO 2787	EO 3171	EO 3534	*EO 3652	EO 4100
EO 2805	EO 3184	EO 3539	*EO 3654	
EO 2807	EO 3190	EO 3547	*EO 3655	With the exception of
EO 2809	EO 3220	EO 3554	EO 3657	the asterisked items,
EO 2810	EO 3248	EO 3565	EO 3672	tune titles correspond
EO 2826	EO 3269	EO 3569	EO 3699	with those on English
EO 2839	EO 3278	EO 3581	EO 3731	Brunswick discs of the
EO 2840	EO 3289	EO 3587	EO 3744	same 'O' series cata-
EO 2841	EO 3300	EO 3589	EO 3753	logue number, as shown
EO 2849	EO 3312	EO 3596	EO 3758	in the supplement
EO 2850	EO 3313	EO 3597	EO 3775	issued with "BING"-35.

*EO 3387 Faith of our fathers/God rest ye merry, gentlemen
EO 3652 Old black Joe/Ol' man river
EO 3654 The girl with the pigtails in her hair/I dream of Jeannie
EO 3655 Lullaby (Brahmns: Cradle song)/Danny boy

As far as I know, none of these four were issued in England.

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As announced in the last issue, we have pleasure in printing COLIN PUGH's listing of Bing Crosby 78's which were manufactured in this country for sale abroad. The list is believed to be complete, but additions, if any, will be welcomed by the Editor.

Columbia 14265 Let's do it (Whiteman)/non-Bing
" 14266 Making whoopee/non-Bing
" DC 50 You brought a new kind of love to me/non-Bing
" DC 497 You're getting to be a habit with me/You've got me crying again
Odeon A221.129 Susianna/non-Bing
" OR 2475 My kinda love (Dorsey Bros.)/non-Bing
Decca BM 02054 Silent night/Adeste fideles
" BM 02577 Let's waltz for old time's sake/The moon of Manakoora
" BM 02640 On the sentimental side/My heart is taking lessons
" BM 03080 Shoe shine boy/Dinah
" BM 03383 Song of freedom/I've got plenty to be thankful for
" BM 03410 Moonlight becomes you/The road to Morocco
" BM 03554 Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral/Let me love you tonight
" BM 03569 Ac-cent-tchu-ate the positive/There's a fellow waiting in Poughkeepsie
" BM 03581 I promise you/More and more
" BM 03604 Welcome to my dreams/It's anybody's spring
" BM 03624 I can't begin to tell you/Symphony
" BM 30434 Clementine/non-Bing
" BM 30598 The Christmas song/O fir tree dark
" FM 5390 Oh! What a beautiful morning/People will say we're in love
" FM 5419 Now is the hour/Silver threads among the gold
" FM 5428 The sweetest story ever told/Mighty lak' a rose
" FM 5431 Just a prayer away/I'll be yours
" M 3620 Lily of Laguna/Wait till the sun shines, Nellie
" M 30225 Summertime/Deep purple

Add to these the items listed on page 12 of the supplement distributed with "BING"-35, September 1974.

CROSBY SHOPPE

Free advertising for members wishing to buy, sell or exchange items of Crosbyana.

(Please note: advertisements for this section of the magazine should be sent to the Editor, "Bingville", 72 Stromness Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 4JQ, England - not to the Secretary, Reg Bristo).

WANTED: Cassettes of TV or radio shows with Bing and Frank Sinatra appearing together. Please write to Mrs. Beryl Overbury, 60 Highland Way, Redditch, Worcs. B98 7RH.

FOR EXCHANGE: The following records in perfect condition are for exchange only:

(1) "THE JAZZIN' BING CROSBY" Joker SM 3053
(2) "HOLLYWOOD FILM MUSIC OF THE THIRTIES" Joker SM 3241
(3) "THE GREAT VOCALISTS" Joker SM 3278
(4) "BING'S BUDDIES AND BEAUS" Brunswick LAT 8306
(5) "ZING A LITTLE ZONG" Brunswick BING 14

My wants are as follows:-
"BETTY GRABLE" (Star-Tone ST 219); any Decca LP by Dick Haymes; various US 78's of the Andrews Sisters. What have you? Please write to Mr. E. P. Allan, 16 Kirk Street, Edinburgh, EH6 5EY.

FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE: The following US LP's are in new condition, but are without sleeves:-

(1) "THE ORIGINAL SOUND OF THE TWENTIES" (3-LP set) Columbia.
(2) "I CAN HEAR IT NOW" Columbia.

£4 (including postage and packing) - first come, first served ... or will exchange the four LP's for "A WARM AND WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS EVE WITH BING AND FRANK" (US 'Ho Ho Ho' Amalgamated album). Please write to the Editor, "Bingville", 72 Stromness Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 4JQ.

WANTED: "101 GANG SONGS" Warner Brothers W 1422, and "AMERICA, I HEAR YOU SINGING" Reprise F 2020. Please state prices and conditions. Ian E. Arnott, 22 Sycamore Crescent, Culcabock, Inverness, IV2 3SA.

WANTED: A copy of "BING", issue 34, June 1974. Also the following albums:- "THE JAZZIN' BING CROSBY" (Joker), "THE GREAT VOCALISTS" (Joker), "PAUL WHITEMAN ORCHESTRA - 1928" (Family). Please write to Wig Wiggins, American Embassy, P.O. Box 535, Valletta, Malta.

FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE: Cash offers are invited for the following LP's, but exchanges will be given priority:-

(1) "AFRICAN SAFARI MEDLEY" (10" non-commercial LP)
(2) "CHRISTMAS STAR" (US Moonan Music)
(3) "BING AND JUDY" (US Legend)
(4) "SHE LOVES ME NOT" (CAN Totem)
(5) "BING AND AL" (CAN Totem)
(6) "REHEARSAL LP" (12" non-commercial album of "Holiday in Europe" rehearsal session, held in London)

My wants are as follows:-
"I'm Crazy Over You" - any original; Crosbyana Collectors Library albums, nos. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10. Please write to J.M.J. Joyce (Butchers), 16 The Square, New Invention, Willenhall, Staffs.

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A representative of 'United Artists' in London is considering making a bust of Bing Crosby. This will be a first-class professional project, and individual copies will be made on order. The price, initially, will be approximately £60 per bust, but this will be lowered if the response from members is good. If you are interested, please write to Mr. Austin Bennett, World Records Ltd., Parkbridge House, Little Green, Richmond, Surrey. (Don't all rush at once!)

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OFFERS INVITED: Lionel Pairpoint dares to offer a rare 10" LP of Frank Sinatra! Entitled "SING AND DANCE WITH FRANK SINATRA", it is on the Phillips label, BBR 8003. Write to Lionel at 86 Ellesmere Ave., Mill Hill, London, NW7 3HD.

The following items are available to members only:-

CLUB TIES in navy blue and of the finest possible quality, worn by the Editor and hundreds of members at many public functions. £1.10 each, plus 5p p&p

CLUB CAR BADGES for either grille or bar fitting - please state your requirements. £3.50 each, plus 15p p&p

Both items bear the special full-colour emblem designed for the ICC. Please allow eight weeks for delivery. Cash with order, please, to:

RON BAXTER, The BADGE CENTRE,
24 ROPERGATE, PONTEFRACT,
WEST YORKSHIRE, WF8 1LY.
Tel: 2351

(Prices quoted above replace those printed in all previous advertisements)

A few copies of the 1974 "BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY" are still available from Reg Bristo (not the Editor) at the give-away price of 45 pence, post paid. Compiled by Leslie Gaylor, John Bassett and Bert Bishop, this book is currently the only available, up-to-date (June 1974) listing of the records of Bing Crosby since October 1926.
(Each copy printed with special adhesive ink - once you pick it up, you can't put it down!)

MORE "CROSBY SHOPPE" ON PAGE 43

TIM BROOKS (Jackson Heights, New York) raises one or two interesting points in relation to "Ooh! Maybe it's you", Bing's Christmas TV programme, and the currently running 'NEW YORK EXPERIENCE'. Tim writes:-

Ooh! Maybe it's Bix,
Maybe it's Bing,
Maybe nothing.

Ooh! If it is Bing,
What a big price
My copy will bring.

I went and slowed my copy down,
What did I hear? - A groaning sound...

(reprise).

With apologies to Victor 20885! I couldn't resist that! (Maybe I should have). Anyway, I want to pass on a couple of titbits in response to "BING"-36. Firstly, my copy of US Victor 20885 is clearly marked take-7, not 8 as indicated in the article. Probably both 'takes' were issued here?

And as to Bing's Christmas 'special' this year - the show got a 31.4 rating according to the press release, which means that 31% of all the homes in the USA were viewing during the average minute. This is equivalent to about 21 million homes, which ain't a bad Christmas gathering! The show was placed in third position amongst all programmes for that week.

The multi-media theatre project which Bing is backing, called the 'NEW YORK EXPERIENCE', happens to be right across the street from my office in Rockefeller Plaza. The high point of the show, which continually surrounds you with projected images from all sides accompanied by noise and real mist, etc., is the part about the Revolution, during which drums roll and the body of Benedict Arnold drops out of the rafters, swinging at the end of a noose!

That's multi-media!

(EDITOR's comments: Accompanying Tim's letter was a leaflet which briefly describes the 'NEW YORK EXPERIENCE' (A Trans-Lux/Bing Crosby Presentation) as an 'unusual' kind of entertainment. The system uses 37 projectors, 14 screens, special effects, and the most advanced quadraphonic sound equipment ever designed. London's 'CINERAMA' is not a patch on this!)

DO I HEAR YOU SAYING

The title from Bing's 1928 recording session with 'Pops' Whiteman introduces the Editor's Postbag...

KEN GRAY (Chicago, Illinois) writes: In the September "BING" magazine, a single blue sheet was enclosed (as wrapping paper!) that said on it "Australian Newsletter". It was pages 25 and 26 and featured the end of an article on 'Varient Masters' as well as a Statistical article by Tom Northrope. The item was intriguing beyond belief and only pressure of work has kept me from writing to you about it sooner. Can you get me a copy of this Newsletter? I will pay well for it. Even a xerox would be O.K. I'll pay for the copying. It appears to contain invaluable information and my Australian contacts know nothing about it! Shouldn't the tune "Going Hollywood" from the 2-LP set "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" now be included in the Mini-Discography? This is, after all, a regular release. If not, what about the titles from "HIGH SOCIETY" and "SAY ONE FOR ME", etc. - these LP's were soundtrack material, although admittedly more contemporary with the movie release. I know you are attempting to limit the scope of the Mini-Discography but I think this is a mistake. The 'Totems', 'Star-Tones', etc. cause trouble, but I think we should err on this side of over completeness. Limiting the scope might make it easier for people to get a 'complete commercial collection' but as Colin Pugh says, if we don't keep an accurate record of these releases, who will? Items thrown into the non-commercial category may be forgotten in 10 or 20 years because there hasn't yet been a satisfactory start on a non-commercial discography of Bing. Lastly, another minor correction - "Lazy river" has usually been listed as a million seller for Bing, but in fact he got a gold record for it.
(EDITOR's comments: In answer to Ken's first query, "Australian Newsletter" was a regular series in this magazine back in Frank Murphy's days as Editor and Secretary. The last newsletter to appear in these pages was published in "BING"-20. The page Ken discovered with his recent copy of the magazine has been traced to the May 1970 issue, "BING"-18, pp. 18 to 27. I'm sure that someone will be good enough to let Ken have photo-copies of this series if he really needs them. In the meantime, I'm wondering if a re-print of certain items from this series might be welcomed for future issues of "BING"? The newsletter was compiled by Tom Northrope and Keith Hyde, incidentally. Now for Ken's second query:- The recording of "Going Hollywood" differs from titles taken from more contemporary films insofar as it was not allocated an individual matrix number, and furthermore songs such as "Now you has jazz" and "The secret of Christmas" (from the movies Ken mentions) were 'proper' studio sessions to which Bing later mimed on the film set. The legend "From the Actual Soundtrack" is not to be taken too seriously, as I explained in an article several years ago. I think Ken has got his wires crossed when he talks about the recent flood of radio 'air-shot' albums (Totems, Star-Tones, etc.) in relation to the Mini-Discography. He must realise that all these issues are being neatly taken care of in a revision of the LP-OGRAPHY which is where they rightly belong. As it happens, a change of policy has been made with the LP-OGRAPHY that now enables us to freely list all 'pirate' LPs and much so-called 'non-sommercial' material. In conclusion, let us not forget that Bob Roberts has been ably compiling a non-commercial discography for many years now. Its eventual publication date still remains unknown, but in the meantime there is no reason to believe that items thrown into this category may be forgotten in 10 or 20 years time.)

KEN CROSSLAND (Leeds) writes: I don't know if you've heard anything about the "New Paul Whiteman Orchestra", but it seems that the author of the recent book on Bix recently discovered all the old Whiteman orchestra scores, and has re-formed the band playing these scores, a la Syd Lawrence! Naturally, the "New Rhythm Boys" are included. I heard some of their work on 'JAZZ CLUB', Radio-2 Sunday, February 8th, and it really sounds interesting.
(EDITOR's comments: This is the first I've heard about it, Ken. Worth listening out for, I should imagine.)

ARTHUR HOLMES (Middlesex) writes: I have just finished writing a long letter to Reg thanking all concerned for the marvellous bumper Christmas issue of the magazine. What a magnificent issue this was - packed chock-ful of wonderful articles, stories, pictures, and not least, news of the great man. And what fantastic news too? It must surely be a miracle that not only is dear old

Bing fully recovered health-wise, but that the incomparable voice - the voice of this or any other century - is stronger and more flexible than it has been for the last ten years. Glorious news indeed!

NORMAN TOOGOOD (Southampton) writes: Having received the Christmas issue of "BING", may I say right away that this is, in my opinion, the finest issue that you and Reg have yet produced. (EDITOR's comment: You may indeed say that, Norman!) I feel that a large vote of thanks is due to you both for all the hard work and dedication that goes into each issue of our wonderful magazine. You may like to know that a while ago I wrote an article for my firm's magazine (Owen Owen Ltd.) regarding Bing's career and my many years of collecting his records. As this magazine is issued throughout all 15 branches in the UK, plus two branches in Canada (totalling something like 10,000 employees) I feel I've initiated a little publicity for Bing! The news of Bing's London recording session makes me think that it may get Bing back in the charts. And he could do it, of that I have no doubt!

TED TOWLER writes: My belated congratulations on the excellent job you have made of "BING". The very informative record reviews and discographical matter are of particular interest to me, and I eagerly await each quarterly issue. (EDITOR's comments: When I originally took over from Frank Murphy it was my main aim to really 'go to town' over the record reviews in each issue, and with the formation of the 'KEEPING TRACK' team (Bert Bishop, Colin Pugh, Ken Gray and one or two others) I'm fully convinced that "BING" is the only publication anywhere in the world to feature such a comprehensive record review section within its pages.)

JOHN BIGNELL (Middlesex) writes: I've recently been corresponding with Leslie Gaylor over the subject of Bing's 50th Anniversary in the recording industry, and what the 'establishment' proposes to do about it. My feeling is that Bing should be given an honour completely unconnected with the Show Business world (although his own people are sure to do something on a spectacular scale, I've no doubt). I feel that we must ensure Bing is honoured in a comparable way to Charlie Chaplin and P.G. Wodehouse in the January Honours List. The final accolade of a knighthood may prove difficult as Bing is not a British citizen, but if the UK doesn't do something it is inevitable that one of the many other countries will upstage us (particularly Germany or Ireland). However, Reg is commencing a campaign in this issue of the magazine so that we can all lobby the 'establishment' on the subject.

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IN THE PIPELINE...

Our Stateside correspondent, KEN GRAY, informs the ICC that he has future articles planned for "BING" and "BINGANG" which include another attempt at presenting an accurate listing of US 45 rpm boxed sets; US 45 rpm 'singles; and a correlation of US albums and how they were developed, contents-wise, from 78 rpm albums to 45 rpm boxed sets, EPs, 10" LPs and finally 12" LPs.

The next issue of "BING" (June 1975) will feature Ken's compilation of US 45 rpm EPs - labels, numbers and titles. Be sure not to miss it!

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Ken is helping to sell a local jazz collection. Some Bing, but mostly the common 78's on Victor, Columbia and Decca. The jazz material is mostly on 78 rpm and includes a lot of Benny Goodman. If any ICC member has specific 'wants', or is interested in bulk purchases, please write to Ken at the following address: 6301 N. Sheridan Road, Apt. 7-B, Chicago, Illinois, 60660.

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Will one of our members please supply Ken with the following information he needs on UK EP's:- (a) the title and contents of Columbia SEG 7553, and (b) the title of Columbia SEG 7522.

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* THE BING CROSBY MINI-DISCOGRAPHY (2nd Edition). A completely revised and up-dated discography showing each title in order of recording, along with matrix and 'take' numbers. Over 40 pages. 45 PENCE (post free) from Reg.
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BING ON THE BOX

BERT BISHOP reviews the latest radio and television programmes featuring Bing - 'live' and recorded.

A Bing orientated item to start off with this month is the advertisement for 'Super-Soft' hair spray. A romantic setting in a garden, through which stroll a fellow and a girl; he's trying out his Bing impression with "Moonlight becomes you", and when he gets to the line, "It goes with your hair", the camera pans round into a close up of the lass's coiffeure which, to say the least, is a mess! All played in a lighthearted vein, but nice to know that the advertising company realise that a Bing caricature will not be lost on the increasingly up-and-coming viewing public.

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"SATCHMO" (The story of Louis Armstrong) on BBC Radio-2 recently came to an end, but during its run it proved to be a very pleasurable Sunday afternoon programme, particularly when that post-prandial feeling was upon you (having dutifully done the washing-up, of course!). In part 6, Bing was to be heard, and the 'Radio Times' printed Bing's comment: "I never saw him out of sorts, this man worked so hard for so many years. He'd be tired, but soon as it came time to do whatever he was supposed to do, he would bubble and effervesce and be just the Louis that everbody knew and loved".

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Congratulations to Gene Littler on winning the 24th 'Bing Crosby Pro-Am Golf Tournement', completed on the 26th January 1975. On this occasion, Bing provided part commentary with the professional commentators, being concerned with the 17th and 18th holes. The programme went out on channel 12 in West Palm Beach at 5.00 p.m. through until 7.00 p.m. and soon the sponsor of the 'clambake' was saying....

BING: "We have brilliantly beautiful sunshine - just enough wind to examine the talents of these players when they turn for home and start playing 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. They're going to have to hit the ball real well to keep par, or better, on the way home. Gene has a nice lead and he is a big favourite here, and we'd love to see him do well. But there's plenty of very good players still in the chase, and the wind, and the difficulty of these finishing holes may take its toll."

Gene Littler kept his 9 under par lead - par for the course being 72; and it is a remarkable tribute to this 44-year-old golfer that he had the skill and stamina to beat much younger professionals and amateurs alike, despite the fact that he had major surgery for very serious cancer in 1972.

During the golf they took time out to spot Nathanial having golfing lessons from a professional coach. "Where's young Harry?" asked a commentator. Bing replied, "Harry? - he's up home on campus ... sniping at his mother ... practising guitar and training his labradors!"

The tournement over-ran the scheduled time, and it was suggested that it being late, viewers should throw another log on the fire. Bing cut in, singing that line from the song, "Throw another log on the fire..." and then there came the rejoinder, "I knew I'd get you to do eight bars...!" Which remark virtually came at the end of the tournement and telecast. Bing was not seen to present the winners with their awards, but Hubert Green and Tom Kite came second and third respectively.

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A late starter, but very welcome entry in the review stakes, was Bing's 'live' appearance in BBC-1 TV's Saturday programme, 'GRANDSTAND'. A sight of Bing 'live' on TV in the UK is a very rare occurence and not to be confused with pre-recorded telecasts; so obviously this was an event to relish, and, personally speaking I am grateful to George Patmore for drawing my attention, via a telephone call, to the 'Daily Telegraph' news item which read 'CROSBY ON TV' - this at breakfast-time. By 12.30 p.m. of that day (22nd February) both camera and tape recorder were set up for the big event; which in this case was Bing's invitation to sit in with Frank Bough and watch and comment on two of

the four 'over the sticks' races that were being televised from Kempton Park that afternoon.

After a few minutes of his introduction to the day's sporting activities Frank Bough commented, "Well, now, rather untypically for Grandstand let us pause now for a little gentle touch of music". Said music was a bar or two of "Where the blue of the night" (Bing's 1945 version) which Bough interrupted by saying, "Now don't worry - we're not going into the disc jockey business on Grandstand, but the owner of that voice will be with us here in Grandstand this afternoon. Bing Crosby, of course; a racing enthusiast; nuts about golf; he's over here recording, in fact, and we heard he wanted to watch some good racing so we invited him to the studio this afternoon, and he's coming along a little later on - about 2.20 he'll be with us to enjoy the Kempton Park racing and no doubt talking a little bit about this and a little bit about that".

The 'that' proved to be show jumping, Canadian ice hockey and golf. It was immediately after the first of the show jumping events that Bing arrived in the studio, sporting a lightweight hat with three initials printed on the front of it, other casual clothing, and looking as fit as one would expect after a tiring and, in the case of his brother's death, harrassing schedule of the previous 10 days. Bough welcomed him to the programme and Bing opened with the comment that he didn't know too much about jumping races - most of the American racing is on 'the flat'. San Anita is the main event in the USA at the present time, which Bing said is where he would be were he not in the UK. He recalled how he began his racetrack called Del Mar in the State of California, going back some years to when he had a stable of about 40 horses. Bing reminisced about particular horses he had owned, or part owned, including Meadowcourt, which ran into second place in the English Derby in 1968.

Frank Bough interjected, "I must say, sitting here looking at you, you look incredibly fit!" Bing replied, "Well, I don't believe that. I've had a long, hard day! Been recording since nine o'clock - we recorded till about 1.30 and, er, kind of tiring with a big band. But I feel fairly okay ... I gotta keep my hand in, Frank - you gotta be doing something. It's always a kick for me to work with a good band. That's the most enjoyable part of show business, as far as I'm concerned, is singing with a first class band with good arrangements. They's got a marvellous band put together here - United Artists is making the album ... mostly old standards, and some new songs. Two albums. One of them is called "That's What Life Is All About". Philosophical selection of tunes like "As time goes by". And the other album is old show tunes from Broadway and new show tunes from Broadway". "And the voice is still going well?" asked Bough. "No", replied Bing, "I think it's falling apart but I'm still stealing a little money with it!"

They then joined Julien Wilson at Kempton Park for the 2.30 p.m. 'Yellow Pages H'cap Hurdle' for which a horse called Philominsky was favourite; or, as they say in the States 'choice'. Bing refused to be drawn on this tip as it seemed that Wilson had tipped Bing a loser on a previous occasion! As it transpired Bing made a wise decision for Philominsky wasn't in the first three.

"You must stay with us for the next race - it's absolutely unbelievable!" said Bough. "Why?" asked Bing. "In the next race at three o'clock we have a horse called Uncle Bing - we didn't arrange that!" responded Bough. "Oh!" cried Bing, "Where can I get down on this horse? I'll have to make a quick wager! I was up at Doncaster - I was with the parish priest who lives up there and we looked at the card and there was a horse called Crosby Don. I have a cousin named Don Crosby, so it looked like a great tip. I went to see the trainer and he said 'No, not today - he's not well intended' and so I didn't bet; but the priest went out and bet a chunk on him - paid about fifty-to-one! And he did a lot better than he did at his church next Sunday, I'm sure!"

After a look in on the Toronto Mapleleafs and the Montreal Canadians - about which Bing was well informed - and a chat on Bing's current golf form including Bob Hope's Tournement ("How is the old fella these days?" asked Bough. "Hope? Oh, he's great - he plays in the tournement. He looks kinda ridiculous, but he stumbled about - lurched about! But he had some laughs".) they turned to Gene Littler's fine win in Bing's Tourney as previously mentioned. Then it was time for the 'Galloway Braes Novices Chase', and an introduction to Uncle Bing who was starting second favourite. "He should be a long

price - if he can win under the burden of that name he has to be a helluva horse!" remarked Bing, adding, "It's too late now to get down, I'll just wish him well".

Uncle Bing made most of the running throughout the race of over 2½ miles and came in a five length winner!

As he flashed past the post the studio camera showed us a quick picture of a hugely grinning Bing, which wasn't surprising for the commentator informed us that Bing had sneaked out during the race and invested 'a fiver or so' - which at 5 - 2 against can't be bad. "That's ridiculous ... luck like that shouldn't be allowed!" said Bough to Bing, who retorted, "You don't think there'll be an objection, do you? I did manage to get a quid down over here with some of my friends - they're reliable, aren't they? ... Walking around money - I need it, too!"

From racing back to singing, and the revival of 'Rock' - Elvis and other apparently indestructables. Talk of Louis, Sinatra and "HIGH SOCIETY", and finally into a little demonstration - putting into the 'carpet putter's device' which had been set up on the 'worn studio carpet' - three out of six, which was a fair average, Bing reckoned.

Frank Bough then announced that he had received a telephone call from "Peter (sic) Murphy; and he is the President of the Bing Crosby Society of Liverpool. And do you know there are four-and-a-half thousand people in Liverpool alone who are today sending you their very best wishes?" "I appreciate that, Frank, thank you very much", closed Bing; and took his seat for a little more sportsviewing, leaving British viewers to contemplate a unique television experience and, in the case of your humble reviewer, to collect my fifty bob winnings on the most remarkable tip I've ever had!

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Back with radio we had yet another treat when Bing was Pete Murray's guest on Thursday 27th February's Radio-2 programme, "OPEN HOUSE". Guesting with Bing was David Dimbleby, so between them there was some above average conversation as well as the run-of-the-mill interview-type questions to which Bing and others are expected to respond with an unaffected freshness. At about 9.18 a.m. the 'first patient' arrived - David Dimbleby: "I'm only here to meet Bing Crosby, actually!" Six minuted later Bing came into the studio to join them, "of course, wearing a golfing hat and giving a whacking great yawn" as Pete Murray commented. During the introduction Bing asked Dimbleby "What are you cooking there?"; it being a reference to the cigar he was smoking. "I love the smell of cigars but I don't get around to them anymore", Bing informed.

Pete Murray was soon into the aspect of Bing in his early days being the butt of the kind of derogratory criticism that is aimed at current 'pop' 'stars' - and Bing, being the way he is, went along with this loaded observation, reminiscing on the advent of the 'crooning era' of which he was a leading exponent. Murray asked leading questions: "Weere your happiest days when you were singing with Paul Whiteman?" - "In those days you were a naughty boy, weren't you?" - "Didn't at one time you finish up in the caboose?" - which, to me, is a negative approach and can only be expected to produce stock answers. However, time is a limiting factor on such programmes and ere long, Bing was being <u>told</u> that his favourite song was "Now you has jazz" - which was certainly no hardship to hear again. Bing talked with some affection of his old "Gone fishin'" pal - the great 'Satchmo' - and one of the more amusingly elevating moments of the programme was a discussion on the Swedish drinking salute, 'Skol', which Louis Armstrong had quoted to Bing on a postcard when he said, "I'm the skoliest cat you ever heard of!". This had Murray foxed, and as he said he was soon going to Stockholm shortly, Bing advised him, "Boy, when they say 'Skol' you'd better get your glass aloft!"

After some discussion on "HIGH SOCIETY" and the 'Road' films and Bing's filmic antics with Bob Hope, Bing explained that he hadn't brought his golf clubs on this visit as his expectations of the British February were not inducive to thoughts of 18 holes - this apart from his rather exacting work schedule. As it transpired, Bing was agreeably surprised with the clement weather we are enjoying.

David Dimbleby's programme, "FACE YOUR IMAGE", is as he explained a far superior programme by way of being a means of interviewing people, "...like

Bing, all his life - endlessly asked the same questions. I had an idea that you get their friends and perhaps their enemies to record comments on them on tape, which you play to them. And then you ask them on why they should be thought to be like that". Bing thought this very ingenious, and upon hearing that Spike Milligan was ready for screening as the interviewee, he said, "Oh, Spike Milligan, one of my favourites - we correspond a little; he sends me poetry; he writes doggerel and funny poetry..." (We must invite Milligan to become an ICC member!) Bing made it clear that he was acquainted with the 'Goon squad', anyway. Asked who he would choose to make such a taped comment on him Bing replied, "Oh, Hope! He would be amusing and ruthless". It seems that the USA have a similar programme called "ROAST", "...which gets a little vicious at times", but expressed the view that he wouldn't mind appearing on "FACE YOUR IMAGE".

Bing declined a cup of tea - "Not long had brekfast" - and whilst a Shirley Bassey record was played Bing and David got well into conversation which Pete Murray had to interrupt by reminding them that they were on the air! The subject being the cut-throat business of American TV. When it was suggested that David might take his programme to the States to interview him, Bing said that it would be 'great', but that he would be back here in July; which is very good news. It was agreed, verbally, that Bing would do David's show at that time.

Charles Thompson's book about Bing, using material from the 14 part radio series that he produced, came in for a mention; but no positive details of publication were stated. But from the wealth of information that Thompson acquired for that remarkable series, it should materialise into a worthWhile biography.

Pete Murray sank to banalities again when he asked if Bing had a favourite anecdote about himself, which both Bing and David found a rather trivial question. Bing responded with the yarn about the coloured taxi driver who asked Bing if anyone had ever told him that he looked like Bing Crosby. Bing replied by saying, "Oh, no, I'm a much younger man than Bing Crosby, and much better looking", to which the driver replied, "You wouldn't mind looking like Bing Crosby if you had his money!"

A track from the "BING SINGS WHILST BREGMAN SWINGS" album followed up as a tenth wedding anniversary request for a listener - "Nice work if you can get it". This led into the reason for Bing's visit to England, in which he reiterated the comments that he made to Frank Bough with regard to the basic patterns of the two albums. Show songs and philosophical. Bing said that Ken Barnes had come to him with what sounded a nice package and gave Bing a chance to come to London - "my favourite city".

Pete Murray had Bing recounting the Whiteman days once more when Bing's poor renditions on the flugle-horn caused that monolithic bandleader to replace Bing's 'raincatcher' with a violin with rubber strings - "I played that brilliantly!"

Bing and David got together again during which Bing initially intimated that he is not openly interested in politics, and though David tried to draw him out on one or two things Bing was fairly cagey. Finally he did make a few pertinent comments on some aspects of the American political structure. Perhaps the Bing record which followed this discourse was whimsically chosen ... "Heaven, I'm in heaven..." from the song "Cheek to cheek" - another track from the Bregman album.

Mention was made of the number of greetings that had been sent to Bing via the "OPEN HOUSE" programme; one was read out from Mrs. D. Pattendon of Maidstone in Kent - "My kind regards to Bing on Thursday. Please thank him for all the pleasure he's given us over the years. Us, who are not so young, have so much to remember. Dear Bing, may he go on for ever".

There was also a note from the Southend Greyhound Owner's: "Greetings to Bing. Renewed thanks for wallet he donated for retired greyhound fund". After some discussion it was decided that it referred to retired trainers rather than greyhounds! A very nice gesture was a greeting from Margie and Michael Holliday Jnr., which Bing was obviously very pleased to recive. "Everyone on 'PANORAMA' sends their regards, too", interjected David Dimbleby. "Yes, let's get 'PANORAMA' in here once in a while", said Bing! "That's a programme you'll never get Bing on", suggested Murray. "Why not? - he could talk about the state of American television - the state of the music business. 'PANORAMA' isn't just politicians", riposted David with disarming candour. From the way Bing went on about

the forthcoming referendum on the EEC, the political corruption, scandals, race problems and permissiveness on films and television - "there has to be discipline for a healthy society" - he may yet appear on Dimbleby's programme! And how refreshing it was to hear such outspoken comment from a respected senior citizen of such international fame. "I'll go on 'PANORAMA' any minute!" he concluded. Well done, David Dimbleby; for I fear the shallowness of Bing's usual interviewers was made painfully apparent by his thoughtfully conversational expertise.

More music was played for listeners during which time Bing signed more autographs "than I've had hot dinners" noted Murray. "Well, I'll start worrying when they stop asking", remarked Bing; and, most amusingly, he continued, "People come up to you in the streets, and I used to keep tabs on what they said - just for the fun of it, you know. You'd be surprised how many people say, 'Bing, can I have your autograph? You're a great fan of mine'; I say, 'I am?' and then we laugh". "How many people say 'It's not for me, it's for my daughter'?" asked Dimbleby, laughingly adding, "Bing has just done three for my three children!" "But you really want it for yourself", interjected Murray. "Yes, I do!" replied Dimbleby. "You're facing your image now, David Dimbleby, and while you're about it, Bing, sign one for me as well!" rejoined Pete Murray.

It transpired that Bing's return visit in July will be for a cancer benefit golf tournament at Turnberry. Mary Henderson of the Cancer Relief Society is promoting it and they're bringing in a number of actor/celebrities to team up with the professionals. This news led into a longish discussion on Bing's golfing confreres and the wonderful benefits that he feels acrue from this very popular sport. That more or less wrapped up Bing and David Dimbleby's appearance on "OPEN HOUSE" - but Bing had the last words and music by way of a two-song selection from his 'MUSICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY' - "Love is just around the corner" and the dialogue lead into the song "It's easy to remember". A lovely Rogers and Hart song with which to round off an illuminating and better than average personal appearance by the number one man in the recording department.

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Following Bing's morning rendezvous with the BBC in London (reported above) he presumably dashed off to Birmingham studios to make a 'live' afternoon television appearance in "PEBBLE MILL AT ONE". This BBC-1 programme goes on the air from 1.00 - 1.30 p.m. and Bing appeared at 1.20 to talk for 10 minutes with resident compere Donny McCloud on the subjects of golf and Bob Hope. Bing was again wearing his sports hat (described elsewhere) for his brief appearance which, but for this mention, apparently escaped the attention of most members. (Editor)

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BOOK REVIEWS

KEN CROSSLAND and BILL WHITE review, in turn, two recent books of interest to the Crosby collector...

"THE GREAT AMERICAN POPULAR SINGERS" (Henry Pleasants - author; Gollancz - publisher; £3.75).

KEN CROSSLAND writes: Following along the lines of Ken Barnes' "SINATRA AND THE GREAT SONG STYLISTS", a new book appeared just before Christmas by Henry Pleasants, an American music critic, whose work hitherto has centred largely upon the operatic field. This latest book is somewhat wider in scope than that of Ken Barnes in that it covers rock and roll, country, soul, as well as the more familiar concept of 'popular singing' as exemplified by Bing, Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Judy Garland and Peggy Lee, all of whom are covered in this book. In all, it includes 22 'great singers' such as Ray Charles, Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley, Louis Armstrong, Hank Williams, Mahalia Jackson, Billie Holliday and Barbra Streisand, in addition to those mentioned above. Mr. Pleasants' book contains some 370 pages, and thus, with only 22 singers to cover, he can devote more space to each singer than was possible in the Barnes book. He offers the often familiar, potted biography, before going on to an interesting, and often highly original, discussion of the singer's art and influence.

The chapter which will interest most of us, is the sixth in the book, handsomely adorned with a recent picture (mid-1960's) of Bing at the Hollywood

Palace, plus some early Rhythm Boys shots. Mr. Pleasants shows signs of a careful study of Bing's work, and recognises him to be "among the most profoundly and decisively influential" of American singers. He lauds Bing's "mellow richness", phrasing and "buoyant rhythm". Equally he respects the tone of Bing's voice, commenting that "the octave B flat to B flat in Bing's voice at that time (1930's) is, to my ears, one of the loveliest I have heard in 45 years of listening to baritones, both classical and popular".

Mr. Pleasants also comes up with one or two new, or certainly less heard of, ideas about Bing's career. He accounts for Bing's longevity of appeal not simply with the picture of Bing as "Joe Average". "Joe Average" grew out of "Joe College" and through his jaunty, debonair style, fashionably irresponsible, Bing symbolised for his generation, the image of their youth.

The advent of the microphone is something which concerns Mr. Pleasants, notably in his treatment of Sinatra. He sees Bing, however, as the first singer to make the microphone work for him. Allied to this, is his quotation from a 1972 review of "BING 'N BASIE" by Pete Reilly, that "After the advent of Crosby, pop singers stopped singing at you, like Jolson, and began singing to you, like Bing".

Clearly the work is full of interest for any Bing fan. Mr. Pleasants never entirely frees himself from the operatic approach however, both in his presentation of the book, and in his ultimate evaluation of the singers. To the layman, the many technical references to notes, octaves, etc. will be meaningless, and the full value of the argument is lost.

Moreover, this operatic approach is instrumental in his admiration of Sinatra - "I cannot restrain myself from saying that I rate him with the greatest singers of my experience ... and well above any other American popular singer". The essence of his judgement of Sinatra seems to stem from the fact that ol' Blue eyes worked closely to the operatic "bel canto" approach. In contrast, Bing says, "I'm not a singer, I'm a phraser". Hence, although he speaks of Bing's voice as "an old and treasured", there remains an air of disdain.

Perhaps it is wrong to compare two singers with totally diverse styles. Equally however it is wrong to judge a singer purely on the basis of an emphasised style. As Joel Vance wrote in a recent article on Bing, "Sinatra paid more attention to the beauty of his art than Crosby did. He also worked harder at understanding a song than Crosby did. That is why Sinatra sounds like he is rubbing the stomach of a song while Crosby is merely combing its hair. But Crosby had an objectivity and an effortlessness based on experience that always eluded Sinatra. Frank Sinatra couldn't sing a mediocre song well. Bing Crosby could ... Sinatra's comeback in the 50's was based on carefully selected material ... Crosby, in the meantime, could record such tripe as "Sioux City Sue" and bring it off". The style which conceals the style is no less great than that which pronounces it.

My argument boils down to a fundamental premise upon which the book is written. The cover flap asserts that the secret of the popular singer's artistry lies in "the relationship of his singing to language". In operatic circles, perhaps so, but for popular singing as we know it, surely the artistry lies in the relationship of the singing to the song.

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"50 SUPER STARS" (John Kobal - author; Hamlyn - publisher; £3.95).
BILL WHITE writes: The book measures 17½" by 12" and is spring bound. After an introduction by John Russell Taylor we are treated to 50 'mini' biographies of stars such as Gable, Chaplin, Boyer, Flynn, etc., each being given from two to four pages. Bing is included, of course, and has a three page spread starting at page 45. Here we have two colour photographs of song sheets ("If you please" and "Straight from the shoulder") together with a black-and-white picture of Bing and Ingrid Bergman holding their 'Oscars' in 1944. There is also a very incomplete list of his films on this page. Page 46 shows three black-and-white photographs: a 1941 picture of Bing in open-necked shirt and sailor cap, a 1932 picture of Bing, Jack Oakey and Toby Wing (Bing and Toby holding an open copy of 'Screenplay' magazine), and a half page picture showing three slightly different shots of Bing at the same session, superimposed one over the other and spread slightly apart. Page 46 has a half-page colour picture of Bing, Bob and Dottie in eastern costume, and a colour shot of the cover of 'Screen Romances'

from 1943, with Bing in his 'Dixie' outfit. The last photograph, from 1931, shows Bing in a shower, with the word "Proof" written right across it. I'm sure I've seen this one before somewhere. In my opinion, Bing's section is hardly worth paying out nearly £4 for, unless you are a dedicated film fan. Most, if not all, of the photographs have been published before, and the accompanying write-up is certainly nothing special.

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WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW! ...
It has recently been brought to our attention that in parts of Lincolnshire, a bread-bin is referred to as a 'bing'!
And we're told that Bob Hope appeared as a surprise guest on "THIS IS YOUR LIFE" in February (for Ted Ray) and referred to Bing as an "orange juice salesman"!

FRED REYNOLDS (address in all previous issues) kindly reminds us that there are currently no vacancies in the "TAPE CROSBY" circle at the time of 'going to press'. Should these occur, an announcement will be made within these pages. As all members will have read, "TAPE CROSBY" is an independent feature of ICC activity, and consists of a frequently changing taped 'programme' of records and discussion which circulates around the country. Members contribute their own item of Crosbyana upon receiving the tape, and one of the most enjoyable items that appeared on a recent 'round' was Bing's version of "Japanese Sandman" complete with authentic accent!

All ICC members are invited to join our affiliated society, the AMERICAN CLUB CROSBY (founded in 1937). Dues are $2.50 a year which includes subcription to "BINGANG", the bi-annual club magazine. For further information, please write to the President: Miss Pat Sullivan, 1301 Sheridan Avenue, No. 96, Chico, California, 95926, USA. Please mention the ICC when writing. Our own KEN GRAY contributes regularly to the magazine, by way of record reviews and discographical information.

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LATE ADDITIONS to "CROSBY SHOPPE"... (see also pages 33 and 34)

WANTED: BING-9 "ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE" and MGM 45 rpm 'single', "The second time around"/"Incurably romantic". Please write to John Ewens, 36 Southview Drive, Upminster, Essex.

WANTED: John Bignell still requires many of the records listed in his advertisement on page 25 of "BING"-36. Check back and see if you can help him out. Write to 21 St. Andrews Avenue, Wembley. (Tel: 904-2539).

THE CREMO DIRECTORY - published by Larry Kiner, 7554 132nd Avenue, N.E., Kirkland, Washington, 98033, USA - contains full details of all Bing's radio broadcasts for Cremo Cigars. The price is $2.50. Please mention the ICC when writing. Larry can also supply TOTEM, PELICAN, STARTONE and similar albums.....

WANTED: "Ooh! Maybe it's you" (takes 7 and 8). Your price paid! Please write to Ken Gray, c/o the Editor, 72 Stromness Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 4JQ.

WANTED: "Ooh! Maybe it's you" (takes 7 and 8). In this instance, please write directly to Wig Wiggins, Jnr., American Embassy, P.O. Box 535, Valletta, Malta.

WANTED: The Editor wishes to hear of any Russ Conway LP's for disposal at reasonable prices and in excellent condition. Please write to 72 Stromness Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 4JQ.

THE REMAINDER OF THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN COMPILED AND TYPED BY THE SECRETARY - REG BRISTO - to whom all magazine subscriptions should be sent (not to the Editor). Your co-operation in this matter will be appreciated.

REG BRISTO WRITES

BING - IN BOND ST !!

What I considered, confidently, would be my easiest story to write - HOW I MET BING, forsooth! - turns out to be my most difficult one... but only because I don't quite know where to start...or even how to start!

In the Christmas issue of BING we gave the astonishing news that our own Ken Barnes - by "our" I mean, British, London, home-based! - the author and producer had persuaded Bing to come to London to do some recording....and did it sound an impossible dream? Pie in the sky? At this time of his incredible, totally unique career, would Bing really come to the country of his most consistent and loyal admirers to make an album? Surely, despite Mr. Barne's insistence that it was "on", it was too much to take in? In fact, let me quote my own words from the last issue:

> "....and we are, of course, greatly indebted to Mr. Barnes. You will see that SOME OF THE IDEAS THROWN OUT TRULY MAKE THE MIND BOGGLE AT THEIR FULL POTENTIALITY!"

But, it all came true! Certainly none of our readers - and indeed most people in Great Britain for that matter - will be unaware that Bing did indeed come to London, for his arrival, as always, was warmly noted and recorded by the press, the radio, and television. The sad passing of Bing's brother Larry - always a good friend to the ICC - brought sadness and consternation in view of what had been planned. But Bing stayed to do what was necessary in connection with Larry's death and his arrival in Britain was delayed by only two days.

Well, I've started the story...my next objective must be to stop this degenerating (if that is the word!) to a near-incoherent catalogue of superlatives. That is no way for 40-years-plus admirer of Bing to behave! Certainly old enough to know better. Yet, most oddly, when I came face to face with the peerless Bing Crosby I had the strange feeling - or is it so strange? - that it was not for the first time. While I must confess to a certain feeling of being over-awed at the same time I felt I was meeting an old friend. No doubt the years and years of listening to Bing, seeing him on the screen, writing about him, and especially Bing's totally disarming personality, all contributed to this feeling that I was indeed greeting an old friend, and not for the very first time. But, I'm getting ahead of my story.

Quite clearly, there is going to be considerable heart-burning, anguish, among many of our readers because they did not have the chance to say "Hello" to the great master. I know this so well because I've had so many letters pleading for information as to where Bing could be found, which hotel, which studios, where...where....? And how I would have loved to tell them....but consider this letter received from Mr. Barnes, dated 21 January, and addressed to John Bassett, Frank Murphy, Eric Crowder and me, Reg Bristo:

> "Gentlemen: .....sorry to be writing a general letter instead of individual messages, but with my present work-load it is the only way I can get things done effectively.
>
> "Regarding the Crosby London sessions, I'm afraid I must resort to the old line: 'I have some good news - and some bad news'.

(Cont....

The good news is that Bing will be making the albums in London before the end of February. The bad news is that no-one will be allowed in the studio. Somehow, the news has been leaking out all over the music business and both United Artists and myself have been inundated with an endless stream of requests from TV and radio people, news reporters, music publishers, fellow-artists and all manner of people who are eager to meet and shake hands with the greatest superstar of them all. WHEN I SPOKE TO BING THREE OR FOUR DAYS AGO HE INSISTED THAT THERE BE NO PUBLICITY AND THAT NO-ONE BE ALLOWED IN THE STUDIO.

"When he arrives in London he is certainly going to be tired after eleven hours on the plane. After which it takes three or four days to get over the jet-lag. Once he is ready to record he is expected to make no less than twenty-four sides. He feels, quite rightly, that these sessions are going to require the maximum amount of concentration AND IF PRESS AND FANS ART AT THE STUDIO HE GOING TO BE OBLIGATED TO TALK TO THEM.

BING IS NOT BEING ANTI-SOCIAL IN THIS MATTER; he is being mindful of the huge costs involved in making these albums... In accordance with the enormity of the project United Artists will be imposing strict security measures to ensure that no unauthorised persons will be allowed into the studio.

"I am sure you understand the situation. My thanks to all of you for your help and kind interest.

KEN BARNES."

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Disappointment? Crushing disappointment? Assuredly. But, surely the reasons for Bing's attitude, as expressed by Mr. Barnes, were eminently reasonable? I certainly took them to be so. I have emphasised certain words in capitals above, they are mine and not those of Mr. Barnes. It was enough for me that Bing was coming, that this seemingly fantastic project, was really on.

Most readers will understand "jet-lag", but for those who do not, it is the disruption to metabolism, the feeling of being off-colour, through gaining in time, e.g. coming from America, even from the nearest parts, means that because of International time changes, one loses up to 6 hours one way, and gains it on the return. That is why transAtlantic flights in Concorde, for instance, will mean that by the clock only, one will land before one has taken off! Think about it! And when you consider how much difference to one's feelings the single hour of Summer Time can make it will be appreciated that "jet-lag" is a real problem -- or can be. And certainly it cannot be considered an encouraging factor in the face of making 20 or so recordings!

Another aspect, as I finally learned, is that recording studios are purely functional. They do not cater for audiences, or indeed, an excess of visitors of any kind. There are no public "seats", no gallery, no hall....just a mass of glass-partitioned cubicles, plate-glassed and soundproofed...strewn with cables, microphones, headphones, - and, incidentally, MUSICIANS!

More and more, it seems to me in passing, that the days of recording at Decca, or EMI and the other recording companies, are virtually over. It seems to be common practice today that producers and artists produce the master-tapes at more or less private recording studios and submit them to the big companies. All that is needed then is their mass-production pressing and packing facilities.

(Cont....

However, to resume the main theme, Bing arrived and the BBC were quickly on the ball, as ever, announcing that the legendary Maestro was here. The Daily Mirror quickly followed up with a "gossipy" story on their "Inside Page". This is reproduced for those who missed it in our "feature cuttings" page opposite. It is only fair to say that this story was grossly distorted in that it made out Bing to be in aggressive mood! I am reliably informed that remarks of the kind reported were not made. We do know that Bing needs no gimmicky aids when recording - his voice has always been delightfully sufficient - and we also knew that his recordings do not need the intensive "doctoring" and augmentation that the majority of lesser artists find necessary. Still, it was good to see Bing prominently in one of the biggest "dailies".

THAT DELIGHTFUL T.V.APPEARANCE

Bing had already made an excellent start to his recording marathon when the ever-resourceful BBC producers had coaxed Bing into a virtually un-announced appearance on the big-audience Saturday afternoon GRANDSTAND programme. To have Bing on a totally non-musical programme is not only a tribute to the diversity of Bing's appeal - his sporting activities - but also a measure of the BBC's always warm desire to present him. Many were the telephone calls and hurried notes that flew around trying to tell everyone that Bing was on the box.... and what a truly delightul appearance it was! Frank Bough, the highly competent and friendly compere was clearly delighted to have the "task" of talking to the maestro - as also were the technicians in the studio.

Happily, many of our readers did catch this TV spot as their letters soon told me. MR. A.WARD, of 5 Warwick Street, Sheffield, S10 1LX wrote a typical letter as follows:

Dear Reg: I'm not much of a writer but I do feel compelled to write to you and comment on yesterday's GRANDSTAND programme on BBC 1 TV. Who IS this man Bing? What is this man Bing! He goes on and on, with brilliant performance following brilliant performance. What a wonderful appearance for a man of his age - and what a beautiful sense of humour apparent - as always - the way he went on chatting so easily about horses, trainers, etc. amazed and delighted me. Then he had the little side bet on 'Uncle Bing' and instantly one felt 'this man is definitely one of us!'

I had a laugh, too, when Frank Bough asked Bing how his voice was? Bing replied in his usual deprecating way, but revealed he had been recording from 9am - it was around 1.30 when he came on the telly - so, what a grafter Bing is! He went on to say he was recording two albums for United Artists - and typically, what a good band they had for him. And then, forsooth, Frank had Bing up, putting on the studio floor! There he was, as happy as a two-year-old - and I noticed how concerned Bough was that Bing shouldn't over-exert himself.

What a day! I just never expected this. I called my son into the room - he was banging away with something called SLADE. I said: "This is BING!" And like most youngsters his first remark was: 'Isn't he old'.....Old, no, he's GOLD! Anyway, the lad conceded it was a sparkling performance. Time those two albums are out I think he'll be yet another fan. I just thought I'd write and tell you I'd seen Bing on the telly....."

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I HAVE REFERRED EARLIER TO MYSELF AS A "40 YEARS' PLUS" ADMIRER OF BING....HONESTY, AND THE FEAR THAT MAY BE AMBIGUOUS, COMPELS ME TO POINT OUT THAT IS THE ACTUAL TIME I HAVE FOLLOWED BING. NOT, ALAS, MY YOUTHFUL AGE!

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Which brings me to the essentials of this latest visit of Bing's to Britain.....

JAN '75

A FILM TO PLEASE THE CROSBY FANS

"COLLEGE HUMOUR"

Reviewed by "Melody Maker" Special Representative

"COLLEGE HUMOUR," the new super Paramount film in which Bing Crosby is the star, the big vocal shot, and lady-killer-in-chief, opened recently at the Carlton Theatre with the usual big advertising boost and long fanfare of publicising trumpets.

One's reactions to the film depend entirely upon whether one desires to witness a good entertainment or whether one's visits to the theatre are prompted purely out of interest in Bing Crosby's own personal achievements.

If the former is the case, considerable disappointment is in store, for the film itself represents the scantiest entertainment. In the main, it consists of an incredibly disjointed hotch-potch of fantastic incidents which could have been connected with no college ever known in this world, not even ruling out those of which we read with such avidity in our boyhood days.

Plugged Theme

The whole thing is held together in the flimsiest manner, with scarcely a vestige of plot, and one's first impression is that one is viewing the film after about half of it has been cut out.

To come to Bing himself, the outlook is completely and utterly different, for in spite of his admitted lack of the essentials of acting technique, his immense vocal ability and his natural charm carry everything before him.

Bing sings several songs, his *pièce de résistance* in a vocal respect being, of course, "Learn to Croon," the big number of the film, in which his prowess in delivering is only exceeded by the number of times in which he sings it.

Bing vocalises on all kinds of impromptu occasions, and every other incident seems to be a forced one concocted primarily to give Bing's vocal chords yet another chance of being exercised. So often does this occur that we were quite surprised when a big "rugger" match, magnificently portrayed in the film, was not held up specially to give Crosby fresh opportunities to croon.

Singing Schoolmaster

Bing's rôle in the film is that of "Professor Danvers," a master of some subject or other at the college, although we are not told precisely what.

On the whole, from my point of view, I would a thousand times prefer to see Bing Crosby in a short, as his singing is the only thing which held my attention through the whole tedious course of the film.

From Britain's
MELODY MAKER -
12 Aug. 1933.

OLD TIMERS Bob Hope and Bing Crosby are still huge attractions. Last week they had their own television variety specials and ratings show they wiped out the opposition—with a 40-million audience.

Bing's back—still stepping out in front

20/2/75

BING CROSBY stepped into a London recording studio yesterday and firmly waved away the aids used by pop stars half his age.

WITH THE BAND: CROSBY

Instead of going into a protective vocal booth he insisted on standing right out in front with the band.

"I'm a band singer," he said, "and I want to sing with them.

"That's why I came all this way."

His producer Ken Barnes fussed about the strength of his lungs which only a year ago underwent a major operation.

Crosby brushed him aside. "If the band get louder," he said, "I get louder."

And he did as he went into his old favourites such as The Best Things In Life Are Free, Breezin' Along With The Breeze and Some Sunny Day.

Just as if he did not know what it is to be 73, or to have nearly died under the surgeon's knife.

He is here to make two LPs. One is to be called That's What Life Is All About.

The other Barnes wanted to call Bing Back On The Ball.

The Old Groaner would not have it.

He protested that it was too much like Sinatra's Ol' Blue Eyes Is Back.

Sternly he demanded. "What does everyone mean by a comeback?

"I've never been away."

HOLLYWOOD — Another holiday season has come and gone and once again Bing Crosby was the No. 1 singing sensation on radio. You heard Bing singing White Christmas on every radio station you turned to.

This record accounts for a mere 40 million of the 400 million records Bing has sold in his career.

It's the largest selling record of all time and Bing has turned over the royalties to charity. He did the same thing with Silent Night, also a multimillion seller.

Bing, in case you didn't know, is the most popular singer in Ireland and Finland. Ireland you can figure because Bing is mostly Irish and he has popularized a lot of Irish songs like Donegal Bay. Finland he can't figure. He's not too popular in Denmark even though he has some Danish blood in him on his father's side.

The Danish government some time ago banned his records and movies because he blasted the Danish fishing industry for the way they were rapidly destroying the Atlantic salmon, one of the great game fish of the world.

Bing was surprised recently to learn that a chap named Bob Roberts in Chatham, England, is probably the number one Crosby fan. He has 8,000 individual records of the old groaner.

"Very glad to hear those tidings," says Bing. "Now I know where to go when I want to borrow some. I don't have anywhere near that number."

Bing has made a mistake or two in his time. The other day I wrote about Billy Daniels and his trademark song, That Old Black Magic. In the item I said that the song was introduced by Johnny Johnston in a movie called Star Spangled Rhythm. Funny thing is that Johnny Mercer wrote the song for Bing in the same picture. Bing didn't like it and chose some long-forgotten patriotic ditty instead.

* * *

READERS MAY FEEL THERE IS SOME SLIGHT DUPLICATION OF REPORTING IN THIS ISSUE: BUT WE TOOK THE VIEW THAT MEMBERS CANNOT READ TOO MUCH ABOUT BING'S MOMENTOUS VISIT TO BRITAIN IN FEBRUARY LAST.

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MORE CROSBYE SHOPPE: John Woolnough, 572 Reading Rd., Winnersh, Wokingham, Berks offers (at which he believes he remembers paying for them) the following:

Bing's Mack Sennett Soundtracks (New 7" 33⅓)
10" LP LA8687 Collectors' Classics. No. 1.
" " LA8723 " " " 2.
" " LA8726 " " " 3.
" " LA8727 " " " 4.
" " LA8732 " " " 5.
" " LA8742 " " " 6.
All above New or Excellent, price £1.50 plus postage.

Hallmark HM520 Crosby Classics. 75p
Parlo PMC 7006 Voices of Singing 20's £2.50
Pelican Soft Lights & Sweet Music £3.00
Windmill WMD190 Louis and Bing on Stage. 55p

(John feels someone may want these - and here also wants to contact people within a reasonable radius of his address.)

Seems excellent opportunity all round.

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Jack Woad, 71 Castle Crescent, Thornhill, Dewsbury, West Yorks, WF12 0EH has:

BING'S HOLLYWOOD Nos. 10 and 14, and the Autobiography LAT8382 (1934-41) for sale or exchange.

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IT IS HOPED TO INCLUDE SOME OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT BING'S RECORDING SESSIONS IN THE NEXT ISSUE.

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A book-review in this issue suggests that Sinatra sang "bel canto"! If that is so, then Mick Jagger sounds like Gigli....or Lulu...

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Reader S. J. AUSTIN, 58 Pear Tree Avenue, Yiewsley, West Drayton, Midd'x writes:

> Re. the 78 listing I must raise one eyebrow at the listing of 12" Brunswick 116 as "St. Louis Blues"/Non-Bing. True enough, but "Creole Love Call" by Duke Ellington is still in my book the finest big band record of all time, and has never failed to impress each new generation of teenage visitors here, whatever the craze music of the time. I fully agree that the term "Non-Bing" can in most cases be regarded as a severe criticism, but definitely not in this instance.

To which I (Reg Bristo) can only reply: Criticism? Most certainly not..I have the highest regard for the Duke and this wonderful number. But non-Bing items are not relevant to a Bing listing. For example, in an Ellington discography that record would be listed as "Creole Love Call"/Non-Ellington..... just in case any other readers were under the impression that non-Bing implies criticism. Mr. Austin is clearly a Bix fan, too, if the others care to take note!

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MY BOX MARKED "BING: NEXT ISSUE" is still full of interesting letters which but for the space devoted to Bing's visit, would be in this issue. I want the writers to know their letters were, as always, keenly appreciated... Even our voluble new friend, JOHN MARSHALL, of 39 Kings Road, Teddington, Midd'x hasn't manage to get in this time - to my regret! Especially as John has been cooking up some nice little ideas (and photographs) with which to adorn, and notate, his cassette holders in the absence of "record sleeves". Quite a number of readers are doing this: we'll have to share some of the ideas around.

THE MAGIC WORD!

....then, like all of our readers, I was very conscious that Bing had been here for a week or more and that his scheduled visit was nearing its end and another opportunity to meet Bing was slipping away.....

> Readers may be surprised to know that despite being a fan of Bing's for the period I have stated - that is, from 1932 - and my intense activities in organised Crosbyana with this magazine (and others) and generally on behalf of the ICC, the truth is I had never met Bing! I've experienced one or two "near misses" by getting to London just too late, and I once spoke to Bing on the telephone. I was in the audience at the Parkinson TV Show - but, I'd never come face to face with Bing. And I was resigned to the fact that once again my ambition was not to be realised.

Then from Leslie Gaylor - who else could it be? - came the magic words in a letter, part of which read:

> "BING HAS EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO MEET 'ONE OR TWO' OF THE CLUB MEMBERS ON THE FINAL SESSION, which will be February 26 right at the end of the recording. I have a copy of his letter to Ken Barnes in which he expresses this and to play a few recordings and he may even sing us a song or two.....the final session is from 10 to 1pm and Ken is of the opinion we could be admitted about 12.30 or perhaps a little earlier. So keep your fingers crossed! Give Ken a ring....."

I lost no time in ringing Mr. Barnes only to find he was at the studios but would be home around four in the afternoon. So I rang again about 4.30 and he was able to confirm that there was every chance of just a 'handful of members' coming along on the Wednesday, Feb. 26. I was also able to confirm what I already strongly suspected: that Ken Barnes really is a most delightful man. He was full of bubbling enthusiasm about the way the strenuous recording schedule had gone, reiterated what a joy it was to work with Bing and assured me again what tremendous vocal style Bing was in. I felt Ken was an old friend within the space of a couple of minutes. I am particularly looking forward to Bing's rendering of that lovely song, GLOCCA MORRA. I believe I am right in saying this song was specially included because Les Gaylor has been asking Bing to sing it for years! Ken told me over the telephone:

> "....Bing's ballad-version of Glocca Morra is incredible. It is THE definitive version. Really tremendous."

This was on the Monday evening and Ken suggested I telephone again the next day just in case something had intervened to upset the plans in view of my fairly long journey. Tuesday night brought the exciting news that it was all "on" so Wednesday morning it was no trouble for me to get up at the crack of dawn so anxious was I to start my journey to Paddington. Ken had suggested 11.30 am, and my timing was pretty good for I was at the door of the studios at - 11.25am! But, I still didn't believe I was going to meet Bing! It just didn't seem possible...dreamlike, I suppose.

==========

I found it was necessary to climb the stairs....at the top I was asked who I was.... I told them but it made a much bigger impact when I added that I was there to see Mr. Ken Barnes! The door opened....a corridor, and I espied Editor John Bassett! Someone I didn't know was sitting there, too - and it turned out to be Bing's car-driver....various signs were around: No. 1 Studio, control room, a small reception desk....as I said earlier, everything purely functional.

John and I were speculating if anyone else was coming....when a man in a white sweater came up and instructed one of the staff to "go and find out who is operating a tape-recorder in the listening room! And stop them!"

"Yes Mr. Barnes...." Mr. Barnes! I said....and I made my first contact with this

genial man whose enterprise, persuasiveness and enthusiasm has injected such a fantastically new impetus to Crosbyana. Clearly Ken Barnes was more harassed than the proverbial one-armed paper-hanger and we had no more chance than a fairly hasty greeting. Yet, when Ken said: "Good to see you Reg!" oneknew he meant it. But as I've indicated he was an extremely busy man - seemed whenever he showed himself outside the control-room he was wanted on the telephone by the BBC, would-be interviewers, newspapers and goodness knows who else who had learned that Bing was in London "under his wing", as it were.

"Come along Reg, John - we've got a bit of a space problem here, but see if you can squeeze in here..."

Here was a smallish listening-room, equipped with enormous speakers and with plate-glass down one side instead of a wall: as Ken opened the door there was a flood of high-powered music - with the majestic, so familiar, voice of Bing, so dominant, sounding every bit as great as Ken had assured it it was, with Bing so completely recovered from his severe illness.

AND AS WE HEARD THE VOICE - WE SAW THE MAN! THERE WAS BING, SEEN THRO' THE PLATE-GLASS! BING SINGING, IN PERSON, AT LAST! AT A MUSIC-STAND, BUT HOLDING THE MUSIC IN HIS HANDS, SPREAD-OUT.....WITH THAT INEVITABLE PEAKED CAP, A CARDIGAN, AND A LOOSE-AT-THE-NECK SHIRT..... BING HIMSELF!

Bing was two yards to the right of the musical director - PETE MOORE, of course - casting a seemingly casual yet knowing and penetrating glance at him every so often.. musicians in incredible "disarray", all fitted with headphones, were at work with the seeming complete ease of the top professionals. By "disarray" I mean the musicians seemed to be in no coherent pattern as far as brass, reed, strings, piano, harp etc were concerned! The floor was a mass of cables, microphones were everywhere - and yet everyone, especially Bing and Pete, gave the impression everything was fine, everything was going well, everything was going to plan.

We entered when they were "running through" the number "Yours Sincerely"... in other words, it wasn't a recording "take" for Pete Moore was still modifying his arrangement of the song - all the arrangements, incidentally, were hand-written specfically for each instrument!

AND WE HAD SOME GLORIOUS EXAMPLES, BEFORE OUR VERY EYES, OF THE FAMOUS AD LIBBING OF WHICH BING IS SUCH A MASTER....

"What happened to the orchestra?" he asked as they came to a thin passage and it seemed the band was deserting Bing!

"That's a -------- note!" complained Bing on another occasion.

Then Bing stood patiently, quizzically, looking from Pete to the musicians while a little discussion went on between them as to how to iron out this -------- note.

"But Derek will be playing D sharp while I'm playing D natural"

"No, no," says Pete, "You come in when Derek has finished - more an overtone....." Everybody nodded as if to say: That's it.

"Ready now are we?" gently says Bing.

"OkayBing," says Pete, "will you take it again from the first eight?"

"Sure," says Bing, "ready when you are.....we double up on tempo then.... right....good! All clear...."

Artists of the highest calibure making difficult work look easy: I'm sure Ken was as delighted in the control-room as we all were in the listening room.

Because everyone wore headphones they were all in ready, conversational, contact with each other, and while Pete discussed points with the strings, say, the rest of the musicians quietly went on playing their own phrases as if making use of all time to perfect things.

> I personally could have watched this "rehearsing" all day, but in a surprisingly short time - not more than half-an-hour - all was ready for a pukka "take". This was signalled by an extremely loud bang from the loudspeakers - loud enough indeed, to make one jump from one's chair!

Pete Moore held up his hand and got dead silence for about 10 seconds, then gently brought the music to life.....a short intro from the orchestra, Bing stretched his neck upwards....glanced at Pete, an almost indiscernible nod from Pete to Bing...and in came Bing, majestic, resonant, full, rich-voiced.... and straight through to the end. No interruptions, no breaks for discussion....a complete and perfect "take".

> So absorbing had been the spectacle that I'd barely noticed the other other occupants of the listening-room, but with the "take" safely made, we had time to greet Bob Roberts, our "Guinness Book of Records " collector, Frank Murphy our former Secretary, inevitably the incredible Leslie Gaylor (I think he must have spent the entire time of Bing's visit in London!), Eric Crowder, down from Nottingham post-haste, John Ewens from Essex, and Phil Clarke, up from Southampton. And a tight-fit we were in that listening-room. As I explained, recording studios are purely functional!

After this full "take", the musicians seemed to be taking a break....and we saw Bing arrange his scores on his stand....and then he began to wend his way through the cables, microphones, instruments and other paraphernalia in our direction.....

> THEN HE WAS STANDING IN THE DOORWAY: "HULLO YOU FOLKS. NICE OF YOU TO COME AND SEE ME.....GOOD TO SEE YOU..." I must confess it was rather an overwhelming moment for me. Bing standing there, after all those years, so pleasant looking, so at-ease, so casual (sartorially and otherwise!).....In those few fleeting seconds before I stepped forward to shake his hand and bring him the greetings of all ICC members, I found myself thinking, in truly a flash, of all those songs, all those films, Bob Hope, the Andrews Sisters, and goodness knows what else! An incredible experience. What did I say? I cannot be sure but I THINK I said something to the effect that it was impossible to be original, I knew he had heard it a million times, but...it was a tremendous thrill and pleasure to meet him, shake his hand....
>
> "YOU'RE VERY KIND," SAID BING. Just like that. We shook hands, firmly, warmly.

Then the spell broke: "May we have some pictures Bing?" "Sure," said Bing and soon he was turning this way and that in response to "Bing - this way please!" Soon he was signing albums, photographs, plaques, drawings.....chatting easily to Bob, Frank, Les, and the rest of us. Someone presented him with a very artistic plaque - "Perhaps you'll send it to me?" said Bing.....no doubt wondering how he could look after it and preserve it.

> This must have gone on for thirty or forty minutes, then Bing lookedup after signing the last autograph: "Any more?" Everyone appeared satisfied at last. I found this significant because of an incident that happened later.

Ken Barnes came in much later, when Bing had gone, and asked for Bob Roberts, Leslie Gaylor, John Bassett, and myself to join him in the control-room where he wanted some shots of us with Bing in that sanctum. Making our way thro' the aforementioned paraphernalia of the studio, we found Bing had been collared by a professional photographer for some publicity shots.

> Bing stood there, patiently, while I swear this photographer took a hundred shots. The flash was popping incessantly.....

....

[illegible] minutes, while the four of us stood waiting in the background. At last the photographer signified he'd finished: "Thank you Mr. Crosby"..... Bing turned and walked out.....he had gone to the control-room as we discovered when we entered with Ken.

"I thought we'd have a few shots in here, Bing, with some of your greatest fans," said Ken.

Bing stood up, shook his head: "Been enough shots for one day, Ken" - and walked out! And I didn't blame him!

Bing had very patiently stood and submitted to pictures from us, to signing autographs, until everyone was satisfied. "Any more?" Bing had asked. And that was his portion of time. Perhaps because he has found it necessary; perhaps on medical orders, I don't know but it seems to me Bing sensibly apportions what he has to do and does it in rotation, patiently, calmly, cheerfully. And when he has done it, HE HAS DONE IT! And eminently sensible, eminently reasonable, I feel. His days would be impossible, I fancy, if it were otherwise.

For instance, when Bing finally left us - he went straight to a working lunch in the restaurant upstairs. A private restaurant, that is, belonging to the studios, where Bing was to be interviewed - and photographed! - for a SUNDAY TIMES COLOUR SUPPLEMENT! This should be watched out for around the time the albums are due for release, that is, in July or August. Another bonus of Bing's visit. And then he was roped in for the Pete Murray radio show OPEN HOUSE that so many of our readers were fortunate to hear. I couldn't catch this myself, being at work, but non-ICC listeners told me what a great interview he gave to Pete Murray.

This gives an idea of just what a hectic time Bing would ALWAYS have, especially in London and why, in my estimation, he sensibly schedules his day.

To explain my heading, if you can think back that far: BING IN BOND STREET. The recording studios were those of that vast musical empire, Chappells, and to be perfectly precise, they are in New Bond Street, immediately above the huge record shop. It was a piquant thought that there were probably people looking for Crosby records in the shop totally unaware that Bing was upstairs making new ones!

Needless for me to say, in view of the foregoing, that it was a truly momentous day. To meet Bing and to have the added privilege of seeing and hearing him "at work" was the fulfillment of 40 years' unswerving admiration. I am extremely grateful to Ken Barnes for the opportunity afforded...

Leslie Gaylor tells me he was shewn the sleeve for the first album - a "double cover" in dark, dignified, colours with some superb pictures of Bing - taken, incidentally, at the home of the man who designed the covers. The front of the sleeve shows Bing sitting in front of a piano - a great picture indeed.

Bing is coming back to record a Parkinson TV show and this will be screened to coincide with the issue of the first album. Not only that, the BBC will be providing a large orchestra - again conducted by Pete Moore - and Bing will actually sing some songs from the album.

Ken Barnes will personally supervise the balance of these TV recordings and ensure that Bing's voice is heard to the very best advantage.

IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT ONLY ONE "TAKE" OF "HELLO DOLLY!" WAS NECESSARY!
(In this connection this very day I've read that a "pop" group has just taken five months to complete an album!)

Readers may be interested to know that many of the musicians were of the "classical"

school; and as evidence of the amazing lengths Ken Barnes went to to ensure the musical excellence of the recordings he himself spent a week-end considering and engaging the instrumentalists. Needless to say, Ken has a profound knowledge of this side of the business - and the musicians in it.

I KNOW LESLIE GAYLOR IS REGRETTING THAT KEN BARNES, PETE MOORE AND BING DIDN'T GET TOGETHER YEARS AGO!

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Now we have a few months to wait before the action starts again! This is undoubtedly the biggest Crosby recording project for many years and the potentiality is enormous. I feel it will be up to all of our members, every last one of us, to do what we can to help realise this potential and enjoy once more the supreme pleasure of seeing Bing acclaimed yet again by all, not just we die-hards!

How? Well, it goes without saying we'll all have the album the instant it appears: let us make sure we talk about it, spread the word, encourage the others! More than that, let us flood the BBC producers, DJs, and request programmes, with our letters asking for tracks from "Bing's fabulous new albums RECORDED IN LONDON!" Remark how incredible, in those letters, it is that Bing is still showing the others how....let us, too, send letters to the papers, both National and local, remarking that same incredible fact: that Bing Crosby, in his 50th year as a performer, is still making wonderful records! And we can have a wonderful time doing it!

Readers would be astonished to know the names of some of the top show-business personalities who wished to attend the recordings; discretion forbids me mentioning some of them. Even so, with their usual initiative and enterprise, some members DID manage to get in and meet Bing! For instance, our member Norman Jones, of Port Talbot, turned out to be an old friend of Ken Barnes - and sent me a picture to prove it! Norman writes:

> Ken and I were in the Forces 'together' way back in 1952 and we were stationed at Grays, Essex. In those days I was, then, a very, very keen Crosby fan - Ken, by the way, was.....
> (I'm leaving out the last bit, just for fun! Whatever Ken was in 1952, he's a Crosby man now! - Reg. Bristo).

Then I was told, while in the studios, of the exciting appearance of one of our lady members. I understand she rang the Daily Mirror, forsooth, after their story and enquired where Bing could be found! They told her....and off she went. Seems she could hardly sit, or stand, still with excitement and made the provocative remark: "What a wonderful, wonderful day! My husband will be thrilled - he's at home with pneumonia!" An exaggeration? Possibly.....but our good friend, Mrs. PHYLLIS HARRIS of Pangbourne, Reading wrote to me a few days later as follows:

> ".....I decided I would go to Chappell's studios and take a chance of seeing dear old Bing. I was one of the lucky ones for after waiting around a little while I met Mr. Leslie Gaylor who was also waiting. THEN WHO SHOULD COME OUT OF THE STUDIOS FOR A FEW MINUTES BUT - BING! Naturally, he knew Leslie who introduced me to Bing. It still seems like a dream. I got him to sign my card and then the must have had a word with Mr. Ken Barnes because after a few minutes we were told we could go into the studios! There turned out to be about six of us just watching and listening to Bing making his album. It was overwhelming. I was so thrilled. We were there from about 10.30 until 1.30. Well worth the journey up, AND AS MY HUSBAND WAS SO MUCH BETTER I DID NOT MIND LEAVING HIM SO MUCH...."

How's that for enthusiasm! I sincerely hope Mr. Harris is fully recovered by now!

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A MAN OF FEW WORDS.....

We've just come back from a month in America during which time we attended the 34th Crosby Pro-Am and met Bing, and generally had a wow of a time. Bing looked fit and well and it was a thrill to meet him. We heard on the Saturday of the tournament that Larry Crosby was ill and that he had gone home. We asked Bing how he was and he told us that he seemed to be improving daily. Now, of course, we know the sad news of his death. Clearly he took a turn for the worse after we left.

Larry was a man of few words but always very friendly and helpful and he will be sadly missed. Margaret and I will always remember our meeting with him in 1973. He was interested in learning about Australia - and us - and we didn't really talk much about Bing, strange as that may seem. We will miss Larry....

Graham Reade.
Australia.

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A man of few words: I often thought Larry's letters read more like cables - yet he always made the point, and always seemed friendly. After the death of Everett he appeared to be the "head" man at the Crosby office.....

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We've had the pleasure of hearing from new enthusiasts in Spain (Carlos Ubach), and Italy (Danny Quinn in this issue) and now we have yet another "pioneer" - Neil O'Brien of NEW ZEALAND. While we have a fair number of "mates" in Australia Neil is the very first member from Australia's "off-shore" neighbour. Perhaps he will be the first of many. Incidentally, I've been told that the Aussies favour "mate" rather than "cobber" these days. Its a welcome to Neil - and other new members at home like Roy Bissell, Wednesbury; Pip Knight of West Bromwich; Howard B. Daniel, Virginia, USA; Frank Grant, Glasgow; Jack Hobday, East Ham, London; Norman Jones, Port Talbot, Glam; Ken Merry, Doncaster; Eric Moore, Liverpool; Mr. Oldfield, Rayleigh, Essex; Harry M. Peters, Australia; Clive Roberts, Eastbourne; David Rapp, Warminster, USA; Fred Romary back in the fold (USA); Robin Sharman, Manchester; W. Turner, Devon; Vincent Waring, Wigan and John T. Woolnough, Wokingham, Nr. Reading....

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The last-named, JOHN T. WOOLNOUGH, 572 Reading Road, Winnersh, Wokingham, Berks is most anxious to contact members within, say, a 14-mile radius of his home with a view to collection-exchanges, meetings, &c.

Here's a nice, sensible, advertisement: ROY BISSELL, 26 Charlotte Road, Wednesbury, WS10 7NE, West Midlands - Frank Sinatra LP records offered for Bing Crosby LPS (new from my collection) Please send details of any Bing records available. Well, will Roy get any for that exchange?

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FRANK GRANT, 19 Armadale Str., Dennistoun, Glasgow, G31 2QT is a very prolific collector indeed and is most interested in anyone with Bing records of foreign labels.

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Our new amigo, Carlos Ubach of Sabadell, Barcelona was the unwitting cause of submitting me to quite an ordeal....he was in a position to supply me with a parcel of records and naturally I wanted to reciprocate (one of the advantages, incidentally, of the ICC) but Carlos stunned me when he said he would like a couple of Bing albums AND one or two Sinatra LPs! Well, I got 'em for Carlos - but the wear and tear on my nerves was considerable.....I jest, of course. In fact, I'm beginning to think a lot more of Frankie boy for since our advertisement appeared in the Sinatra magazine we've had a healthy stream of enquiries and new members! Well done, Beryl!

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THE SINATRA MUSIC SOCIETY welcomes new members. The magazine, PERFECTLY FRANK, features Sinatra plus other "great ones" For full details please send SAE to the PRO, MRS. BERYL OVERBURY, 60 Highland Way, Redditch, Worcs. B98 7RH.

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In connection with Roy Bissell's offer (top of this column) he is desperately anxious to get a couple of Ace of Hearts LPs - AH90 "Among my Souvenirs", and AH 122 "Bing In Paris", if anyone can help. I know a lot of members still want, too, the A of H "Old Masters" albums. Seems only yesterday these were being issued and now they are really scarce. AH issu began around 1962 and seemed to continue at intervals all through the 60's. A consolation is that EMI/MCA seem to be embarking on reissues in a totally different form and thus some of the losses may be made good. I've just seen the new Bing with Connee Boswell, Johnny Mercer, Jane Wyman reissue and this will be eagerly snapped up I'm certain. It contains some great favourites.....

OUR FRONT COVER: Requires a special word. As you can see, it is by Mr. A. P. Harrison of 68 Lower Park Road, Hastings, Sussex - at least, the original drawing was by Mr. Harrison - Tony. Once again, reproduction has rather obscured the true merit of this portrait of Bing for it was done in pencil only but Tony very accurately caught Bing's expression, I feel. And it occurred to me it would make an excellent cover.

But, I was a little premature in having it processed! Tony wrote to me and this drawing was naturally the first thing I saw when I opened the envelope. Only towards the end of his letter, however, did Tony remark on it and "hope I would accept it with his compliments".

Well, who wouldn't have accepted such an excellent effort? But the real point of the story is that I have been able to write to Tony and tell him that his drawing is now autographed:

"TO REG BRISTO - BING CROSBY".

Which is cheating a little, no doubt but it arrived just a few days before I had the momentous news that a trip to meet Bing was "on". So, together with just one album, I took the drawing up to town and Bing autographed it for me after taking a long, interested, look at it and remarking: "It's good - very good!"

Which album did I select to take? Well, I don't know whether readers will read anything significant into it but it was one of the BING'S HOLLYWOOD LPs - BING 2. "Pennies from Heaven" which as you will readily know contains "Moonburn", "My Heart and I", "Sailor Beware", "Empty Saddles", "I'm an old Cowhand", "Round-Up Lullaby", "Pennies from Heaven", "Let's Call a Heart a Heart", "One Two, Button Your Shoe", "So Do I", "I can't Escape from You" and "The House Jack Built for Jill". An album I rate very highly for its repertoire. Do you know of a better all-round selection? The date, of course - 1936....

Tony's delighted reply ran: I felt so elevated after reading your letter. To think that Bing himself saw and liked the drawing!" If I hadn't been, as I say, a little premature the cover would now be bearing Bing's autograph but I had the reproduction done just a few days too early for that! And it is certainly an original drawing though of course, all the lettering has been superimposed on Tony's drawing.

ON THE AVENUE ! The album already referred to earlier, must without doubt be one of the greatest windfalls that the Crosby collector can ever have dreamed of. To have Bing's historic first broadcast as a solo artist is something no-one could have bargained for, even in these days of Totems, Pelicans and other startling issues. I just love to hear that announcer: "Mr. Crosby will sing for you every night at this time except Sundays" The start of it all! And it contains so much other rare material which hitherto, some of us have been very grateful to have on tape. And all for the measly price of 99p! It really does sound like a dream.

So, it would be extraordinarily churlish to criticise it - EXCEPT on the following terms. While the sleeve is excellent, with a dignified picture, lamentably it fails utterly to mention the tremendous historical significance of its contents. And while it becomes plain on listening to the tracks that they are from radio shows the sleeve by omission gives the impression that they are pukka records. Furthermore, it doesn't mention that "Ole Faithful" is a fragment; that "Things Might Have been so Different", " apanese Sandman", are not by Bing - sorry, "Ole Faithful" should read "Clouds!" as being a fragment. I'm afraid the casual buyer is likely to be disappointed, expecting an album of Bing performances, 100 per cent, and not aware of the stupendous historical importance of the album. And imagine what it would have done for the sales if the sleeve HAD made great play of this.

Pure gold for the Crosby enthusiast who knows but perhaps a puzzle for those who do not. And, forsooth, the record is in simulated stereo! The sleeve, also, blithely claims copyright and it would indeed be interesting to know the source of these tracks to the producers....but perhaps we shouldn't bring that up!

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Readers will appreciate that this issue was well in the course of production when the great events connected with Bing's visit took place. Understandably many letters and articles have been omitted to make way for these events as they are naturally of over-riding importance and interest.

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A final thought on the Avenue album: what a pity Bing did NOT sing "Things Could Have been So Different!" A ballad tailor-made for him.....

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SMILES FROM "CALL ME LUCKY"

BING'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY - PUBLISHED IN 1953 BY MESSRS. SIMON & SCHUSTER, NEW YORK - our grateful acknowledgements to Bing and the publishers.

NO 4

"During my last year of high school and my first two years of college, a boy named Leo Lynn was one of my classmates at Gonzaga. One day in 1931, when I was new at Paramount, I was going into the studio and I saw Leo behind the wheel of a foreign-made limousine. He was wearing a chauffer's cap but I recognised him right away. I couldn't forget him. He'd been a real shenanigan character in college, putting on impromptu entertainments and mimicking various actors and athletes.

When I'd said hello, I asked, "What are you doing?"

"I'm driving for the English actor, Clive Brook," he said.

"How'd you like to work for me?" I asked him.

"You've hired a man," he said.

Brook wasn't annoyed at my theft of his chauffeur. Leo found a substitute to take his place, and Clive is so aloof, in the traditional English manner, that I don't think he knew Leo was gone. In addition to chauffering for Dixie and acting as a factotum in the Crosby household, Leo was my stand-in. Contrary to the public's understanding of such things, a stand-in doesn't have to resemble the one for whom he stands in. Leo has my skin pigmentation and he's about my height. That's all the cameraman requires.

Leo is grateful to me, too, and perhaps the best way to describe how he feels about me is to report a thing that happened when I was at Pebble Beach playing in the annual invitation tournament. Trying to do any good for yourself in that event is about as tough as doing it in the National Amateur. The Pebble Beach draws almost the same infield that the National attracts and its played over one of the world's toughest courses. I'm lucky if I qualify, let alone beat any of that field.

While I was at Pebble Beach, Leo ran into Johnny Burke in Hollywood. "Where's Bing?" Johnny asked. "He's up at Pebble Beach for the tournament," Leo told him.

"How do you think he'll do?" Johnny enquired.

Leo looked at him scornfully and said: "If he's feeling good he'll win it."

Leo's loyalty is unreasonable and illogical, and I have been careful never to disillusion him. A man needs all the people like that he can get.

Of late, Leo has so many things to do for me that he has no time to stand in for me any more. But he still has time to take care of his "request list".

> If you're a star just about to start a picture, you make out a list of people you'd like to have given jobs as extras in the film. If they're registered with the Guild, the assistant director tries to land them a few days' work as the picture goes along. I have such a list myself but Leo also has one - I suppose he calls it the "Lynn-Crosby Request List", which is ten times longer than mine.

He's very persistent about it and he needles the assistant director until, before one of my pictures is finished, almost all of his proteges are given work as extras.

(cont. over....

An extra is paid sixteen-fifty a day, but, if he has a line to say or something special to do, his pay jumps to twenty-five dollars a day. So Leo's pals are after him to ask the assistant director to give them a line, even if only a one-word line.

One of the names on Leo's "request list" is that of an ex-pug. Leo engineered the pug into a De Mille Biblical picture being made at Paramount, along with five or six of his other ex-fighter pals. The sextette played characters in and around Jerusalem. While De Mille was getting ready to shoot a scene the pug asked Leo if he couldn't fix it for him to have a line.

"I'd like to get more money," the pug told Leo.

"You're getting sixteen-fifty now," Leo said.

"I'd like more," the pug told him.

"Look," Leo said. "Christ is only getting twenty-five bucks a day and you're just one of the bums in Jerusalem."

It was true. An extra was being photographed as an off-screen shadow to give the impression of Christ passing by. His pay check for the impersonation was twenty-five dollars.

When my folks came to California, Leo drove my mother and father wherever they wanted to go. He drove for Dixie a lot too and ran errands for her when I was out of town.

Its not far off the truth to say that he's become part of the family. He's seen all my kids grow up and spoils them outrageously. He brags about them and tells everybody how good they are. They call him Laughing Leo, because he's got a big, hearty laugh, a real belly job.

All my movies are great to him, whether they're good or not, and he carries my latest clippings around with him to show people, carrying on where Dad had left off. So, in addition to being my valet, chauffeur, stand-in, and conductor of grand tours of the studio for friends who come from out of town, he's my self-appointed publicity man. He knows everybody in Hollywood and everyone at the studio knows him and likes him.

One of the best things that's happened to me is a one-hundred and forty-five pound Irish leprechaun named Johnny Burke, who's written the lyrics for such songs as "Pennies from Heaven", "I've Got a Pocketful of Dreams", "Moonlight Becomes You", "Sunday, Monday, or Always", "Swinging on a Star" - an Academy Award winner for 1944 - "Annie Doesn't Live Here Anymore", "Scatterbrain", and "An Apple for the Teacher". Johnny had known Dixie when she worked at Fox and he'd written a song for her then called "The Boop-Boop-a-Doop Trot". Later Dixie and I had a lot of laughs over that title, but in the late 1920's it was considered very jazzy.

It is Johnny Burke who says that he has met at least a hundred and twenty taxi-drivers who claim to have helped me out of the Coconut Grove when I was singing there and "was wobbly on my pins". He also claims that there's another large club of those who "saw a slightly tipsy Crosby fall through a drum".

I run into scores of such "eye witnesses" myself. They are blood cousins to the hundreds of people who went to school with me - or with any other star. When people tell me that they have a friend who went to school with me I ask 'What school?'. They usually say 'North Central' or 'Lewis and Clark', two public high schools in Spokane which I never attended. But when they have a daughter or a niece who went to high school or college with me, I have to tell them that Gonzaga isn't co-educational....

"...just one of the bums in Jerusalem!" Little did we dream, as we thrilled down our spines to those de Mille epics, that such practical, economic, apportioning of relative importance had been going on behind the scenes! Leo must have been quite a character - surely we should have seen him as one of those menacing gentlemen supporting Humphrey Bogart, Ed. G. Robinson, Geo. Raft or Jimmy Cagney! Bing's book is full of such anecdotes - as you will gather from this series, and this particular revelation of how "friends" could earn the odd dollar in films explains why so often we saw Bing's old band-friends popping-up in his films.

"A man needs all the people like that he can get..." said Bing, apropos the unfailing loyalty of Leo. Bing will not want for such loyalty in Britain!

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"RELAXED LIKE CROSBY....."

The name "Crosby" has almost passed into everyday language. So often readers write in and tell us of how they were reading - a book, magazine, newspaper - and were delighted to see a mention of Bing. It is fairly commonplace. Bing is a part of history and can hardly escape being brought into all sorts of situations.....biographies often mention Bing as being redolent, symptomatic, of an age. Even so, I was mildly surprised when his name cropped up - in of all things - a football match report!

It was a report on the Leeds United- West Ham United match of January 11, written by one Leslie Duxbury, in the OBSERVER of the following day. The opening of this somewhat staid (as is the way with the OBSERVER) report ran:

"A performance to charm the birds from the trees earned West Ham United a lot of admiration, if not the match. They were perhaps a trifle unfortunate to give away one goal and endure a splendid one. But their quality even in a fixture as fraught as this shone like a beacon. They were occasionally more relaxed than Crosby and some of their short passing was a geometrical delight.."

There are quite a few readers who will be delighted to see their favourite football teams mentioned in these pages. They will not need telling, either, that Leeds won this match by 2-1.

Concurrently with this, I was reading a book entitled "P.O.W. - A Soldier's Story of his Ten Escapes from Nazi Prison Camps". The author was Douglas Collins. A small extract read:

"The privileged Anglo-American community of Timisul was preparing for Yule. On the radio, Bing Crosby kept singing about a White Christmas, so that even today it is difficult for me to hear that carol without conjuring a picture of Lagarul 14 with its stamping guards and snowclad environs....."

This was in a prisoner-of-war camp in Rumania, and it was 1944. Quite an engrossing book though the author was singularly unfortunate! He escaped 10 times from almost every country in Europe (he was captured early, at Dunkirk) - but alas, was recaptured an equal number of times!

Then there was a story on unusual holidays in the SUNDAY TIMES of January 5 last, entitled THE GOOD LIFE DOWN MONTEGO WAY. An extract read:

"Among the houses he signed up and is now offering for rent (in Jamaica this is) is the palatial second home of ex-Governor Connally. On the walls of another hang signed pictures of its more frequent visitors - dating from Tyrone Power and Clark Gable to Bing Crosby and the Queen Mother. He guarantees to try to stop them dropping in while you're staying there...."

The article went on to explain that these holidays were available to make you feel a millionaire for a fortnight - even if you weren't!